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ABSTRACT

This document contains written and oral statements from 11 U.S. Senators and the Secretaries of Education and Labor concerning the need to improve education standards and job training opportunities for youth. According to the witnesses, legislation has been introduced that will begin such changes, and boards will be set up to establish standards of what students should know. Testimony stressed that a more rigorous curriculum is needed than would have been true a generation ago, since jobs now require higher-level skills. It was noted that other countries have technical-level degrees between high school and college that allow workers to get high-paying jobs. The United States should also develop such a system of technical training and a credential that employers would recognize. Continually stressed was the need to make greater efforts to meet the needs of children early, and to create a technically trained work force. (KC)

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EDUCATION GOALS AND STANDARDS

HEARING

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

EXAMINING THE NEED TO IMPROVE NATIONAL EDUCATION STANDARDS AND JOB TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

FEBRUARY 24, 1993

Printed for the use of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources

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EDUCATION GOALS AND STANDARDS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1993

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND HUMAN RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room SD–430, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Senator Edward M. Kennedy (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Present: Senators Kennedy, Pell, Metzenbaum, Dodd, Simon, Harkin, Bingaman, Wellstone, Wofford, Kassebaum, Jeffords, and Coats.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR KENNEDY

The CHAIRMAN. We'll come to order.

We are enormously grateful for the appearance of Secretary Reich and Secretary Riley before the Labor and Human Resources Committee.

In checking with the Congressional Research Service, we found that this is the first time in the history of the U.S. Senate where we have had two secretaries appear at the same time before a Senate panel. I think it is a clear and powerful message of the understanding that President Clinton has and that the administration has about the importance of education and jobs and work force training, under changed world conditions that have taken place, in terms of America being competitive.

I think we are mindful of the past, when the skills that were necessary to be achieved in high schools across the country were not as necessary and not as intense because we had a proliferation of lower-skilled needs in our work force. That day is gone; it is past. And I think what has been spoken to both, by President Clinton during the course of the campaign, and what these two extraordinary individuals have demonstrated by their lifetime commitment—former Governor Riley and his very dramatic and solid success in achieving educational advances in his own State of South Carolina, which is a solid record of achievement and accomplishment. It is the kind of record that I think all of us are hoping that this administration is going to be able to achieve for young students all across this country; and what Secretary Reich has, over a very considerable time reminded this country about, which is the importance of both education and training and a high-skilled, well-trained work force, and has been an advocate of that position for many, many years.

Some individual companies and corporations have heard that message. Others have not. But the country is hearing it at this present time.

So we are delighted to have them here. I think all of us are mindful that too many of our young people don't know what skills are necessary for them to be able to achieve, and to be able to get a good job that pays well. On the other hand, too many businesses do not know what skills a particular young person may have. Maybe they have a high school diploma, which is some indication, but we know that they need the academic achievement and the training accomplishments.

This administration and these two remarkable individuals' understand the correlation of those two areas, and we here on this committee want to give all the help and assistance that we can in supporting that concept and finding ways that we can make that experience and opportunity available to young people across the country. So we are delighted to welcome them here.

[The prepared statement of Senator Kennedy follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR KENNEDY

Today's hearing of the Labor Committee will address the urgent need to improve education standards and job training opportunities available to young Americans.

The witnesses today are Secretary of Education Richard Riley and Secretary of Labor Robert Reich. Having these two Cabinet Secretaries testify together at a Labor Committee hearing is unprecedented. For too long, bureaucratic and political obstacles have complicated efforts to deal more effectively with the overlapping issues of educating and training the Nation's work force. The joint appearance of these two Secretaries heralds a new era of cooperation in this area.

One of the major economic challenges facing America is to ensure that young men and women entering the labor force are well-educated and well-trained. We cannot maintain our competitiveness in world markets, if the work force is limited by incomplete or poor preparation.

Too many students are not receiving the education or work force preparation they need. Too many drop out of school and are trapped in the endless cycle of dependency and poverty. Many others stay in school but fail to learn the basic skills, let alone the advanced skills needed to have productive working careers.

Half the Nation's high school graduates will never attend college. Most of them are dumped into the work force every year without adequate education or job training. Sink or swim, they are told, and too many sink.

Unlike our major international competitors, the United States has no effective programs linking school to work, or preparing young workers for high productivity, high wage jobs. The economy of today needs workers who can think on their feet, work together as partners with management, and have the skills and flexibility needed for high quality work.

America must compete on productivity and quality. We cannot compete by lowering standards of living. That is a "race to the bottom" that we cannot win and should not run.

In the past session of Congress, Senator Hatfield and I introduced legislation (S. 1790) to reform and revitalize the Nation's job training system. That legislation was inspired by the report, America's Choice, issued by the commission headed by two former Labor Secretaries, Bill Brock and Ray Marshall, and by Ira Magaziner. That report laid out in detail the challenge facing America's economy. Its subtitle said it all: High Skill or Low Wages.

Also in the last Congress, Senator Pell and I sponsored the Neighborhood Schools Improvement Act (S. 2) which passed both the House and the Senate before failing just prior to adjournment. This legislation would have established national education goals and took significant steps toward the establishment of academic content standards and model national assessments. The bill also authorized comprehensive statewide planning to ensure that all students received a high-quality education and provided for multiyear grants to individual schools to implement school restructuring to boost academic improvement.

In cooperation with the Clinton administration, we will soon introduce legislation that will build on these two proposals from the last Congress and will emphasize development of education and skills standards and school restructuring.

These issues—skills standards, education standards, and school restructuring—are the focus of today's hearing.

We all know that it is time for the Federal Government to take bolder steps toward school reform. We must establish academic goals for our students and set education standards for their performance. Without goals and high standards for academic achievement, we will continue to encourage complacency in the schools.

We must develop valid assessment systems to measure what students have learned. Existing methods focus on low-level reading and arithmetic skills, rather than real thinking and problem solving. Not surprisingly, schools emphasize the lower-level skills—and the whole Nation suffers because of it.

We must work closely with business, labor, and educators to develop the kinds of occupational skills that workers should have. Equally important, we must find ways to measure and certify that individuals have mastered the skills necessary to excel in the workplace.

Many States and localities have promising practices that can serve as helpful models for education reform. The building trades apprenticeship system in the construction industry provides an excellent framework for thinking about the structure of a more effective job training system.

Skill standards are a necessary first step in building a coordinated training system. Standards allow students, employers, and workers to measure the quality of the training they receive. Voluntary standards, developed jointly by business, labor, education, and government allow employers across the Nation to assess workers' skills in a meaningful way.

Effective skill standards will also enable us to make sense out of the chaos of current Federal, State, and local education and training programs. The General Accounting Office has identified 125 Federal training programs, with different requirements for participation, and different measures for evaluating results and effective-

ness. Realistic standards will guide us in making those programs more effective.

Secretary Riley and Secretary Reich are especially well qualified to address these concerns. They have outstanding records of leadership and thoughtfulness on these challenges, and I look forward to their testimony this morning.

I would turn to Senator Kassebaum now.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR KASSEBAUM

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I share in your expression of appreciation and recognition of the importance of having both the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education testifying together. I think there is a growing awareness of the importance of linking the two areas.

I think there is a growing consensus around the country on the part of parents, educators, and I would even suggest students, that indeed, education is a prime concern and the gravity of that concern.

I also think that we have to recognize as we always have that the Federal Government is the junior partner in terms of financing and establishing policy for education. Again, coming from my background as a small school board member, I have believed this was of paramount importance, and hope we can keep that in mind as we move forward with initiatives that I believe are important.

I am sure I speak for all my Republican colleagues on the committee when I say that we are ready and willing to participate in developing legislation which will move forward the common goal of a better-educated America. It is my sincere hope that in working off a clean slate, so to speak, it will be possible to develop a bill which will enjoy broad support.

There were some stumbling blocks as we negotiated S.2 in the last Congress, and I hope that particularly as we move to conference on the President's education reform bill that, without reiterating what those were, we can learn from those mistakes and approach this in a fashion that will help us shape some legislation that will serve us well for the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We'll recognize Senator Pell next. I want to point out at the outset that Prime Minister Majors is here, and Senator Pell is Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee and will necessarily be absent for part of the hearing, but we want to acknowledge his leadership, certainly, along with Senator Kassebaum in the education arena.

Senator Pell.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR PELL

Senator PELL. Thank you very much. I appreciate this opportunity, Mr. Chairman.

I think it was clear last week in his statement to the Congress how determined the President was to be truly an education president. I look forward to gaining support in this direction and work-

ing with you both, and I would ask that the balance of my statement be inserted in the record at this time.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be included in the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Pell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR PELL

Mr. Chairman, I join you in welcoming Secretaries Riley and Reich to this important hearing. Of all the Departments that should be coordinating their efforts, none is more important than a cooperative effort between Education and Labor. The link between the classroom and the workplace should be a strong and lasting one.

I am encouraged not only that the two Secretaries are here together this morning but also by my understanding that they have already been talking and working together. That is heartening news, indeed.

It was clear last week that President Clinton intends to be an activist when it comes to improving education. From greater support for Head Start to revitalizing the Pell Grant program, from a strengthened commitment to the Chapter 1 program to giving priority to educational reform, this administration is already off to a strong start.

For this administration to demonstrate so early its strong support for the national goals, for voluntary standards and assessment, and for education reform strategies at the State and local level is very encouraging. It says clearly that education is a front burner issue, and that action should come sooner rather than later. I support your efforts, and will do what I can to secure swift enactment of the legislation you will soon be submitting.

Secretary Reich, I was particularly interested in reading yesterday of your support for an additional year of training beyond high school for students who may not be college bound. As you may know, I have long said that we should be moving to 14 or even 16 years of formal education if we are to keep our Nation the leader in the world economy.

As my colleagues know, I believe that the more time a person spends in education the better . . . be it the school day, the school year, or the number of years in school. I believe that 18 of the 20 growth industries in our Nation need employees with at least 2 years of education beyond high school. Given that situation, I believe you were certainly moving in the right direction with your statement.

Mr. Chairman, I eagerly look forward to the testimony of our two Secretaries.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Metzenbaum.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR METZENBAUM

Senator METZENBAUM. I don't know if the two of you realize what a sense of excitement there is across the American landscape among people of all kinds and natures, about this new administration—about Bob Reich being the new Labor Secretary, a spokesperson for working people. Workers have not had anybody standing up for them, concerned about their future, concerned about their

present and opportunities they have to obtain a job, concerned about the competitiveness of the American worker as against other workers throughout the world. So there is truly a sense of elation that finally there is somebody who is on our side. And I can't tell you the kind of reaction that you get as you travel across the countryside.

And the new Secretary of Education has done exactly the same thing in the field of education, because for too long education has been talked about, but really not a lot has been done about it. And now there is a sense that this will change with your leadership, because of your concern and your intelligence and your conviction that something has to be done to improve our educational system in this country.

I just want to say that having the two of you here together is really a gangbuster idea on the part of our chairman. I just think this is a wonderful day for all of America that the two of you are in the leadership roles that you are in, and I commend the President for having had the thoughtfulness to choose the two of you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Simon.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR SIMON

Senator SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am sorry I got here late. I just heard the tail-end of Senator Metzenbaum's comments, and all I can say is amen; I couldn't agree more. I think we have two leaders who really can lead, and we have a President who is willing to lead and who is willing to make the tough choices. And that's really what we have to do.

I think we have a chance to really do something for the future, something that the two of you can look back upon with pride, and all of us can look back upon with pride, and the American people can look back upon with pride. This is one of those turning points in history, and you are part of turning things around and turning things around for the better.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Simon.

According to tradition, which this institution follows to some extent, we will follow according to when the various departments were established. Since Labor was established before Education, that would be the way that we would normally proceed, but we understand that the two secretaries have worked out an agreeable way of presentation, so we will recognize Secretary Riley first.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD W. RILEY, SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, WASHINGTON, DC

Secretary RILEY. Thank you very much, Chairman Kennedy, Senator Kassebaum, members of the committee.

It is a real pleasure to be back so soon after my confirmation hearings, in a little more relaxed setting as far as I am concerned. I appreciate so much your confirmation of my Deputy Secretary, former Governor Madeleine Kunin.

It is a real pleasure to be here with Secretary of Labor Bob Reich, and I thank you all for your comments, and certainly, I

think both of us want to move forward in a meaningful way together with our responsibilities.

This is an exciting time to be working, as was pointed out, in this business of education reform, and part of that is because we have the support of the country, and we have the support of the administration, but in larger part it is because it is happening in an era of cooperation in partnership with States, with local schools, colleges, families, educators, business and labor.

With the end of gridlock and the beginning of new partnerships, the time is ripe to create a movement all across America to make substantial gains in education—a movement that I think would be focused on the core of education—teaching and learning—to meet high standards—not on silver bullets and not on the simplistic solutions of the day.

This movement is based on a powerful theme that President Clinton often stresses—the coupling together of opportunity and responsibility. This theme has resonated positively and strongly with families across America.

In education, the theme of opportunity and responsibility translates into establishing standards which are challenging for all of our students, be they preparing directly for the work force or for college. This also must include developing new initiatives and redesigning existing educational programs to provide the opportunities for all students to meet these new high standards.

This will demand harder and smarter work from all of us. In my own State, I have seen how such an approach not only raises student, parent and teacher expectations, but also causes the comprehensive reform of schools to help students achieve these more rigorous standards.

One of the several keys to success in education restructuring and renewal is taking the long-term view—a multiyear approach. Another key is ensuring that the reforms are systemic—they must fit together like pieces of a puzzle. The parts must be in sync one with the other. The whole of comprehensive, systemic reform is larger, you see, than the sum of its parts. Real systemic reform focuses on the classroom by starting with a clear set of goals in the form of challenging content standards which establish what all children should know and be able to do.

Systemic reform must address improved curriculum and instruction; assessments that tell us whether students are successfully meeting the standards; the preparation of teachers and principals to deliver the challenging content; parental and family support; the restructuring of schools, and the provision of real opportunities for students to move from school to work and/or college.

Systemic school reform is not a new idea. Many business, education and parent groups throughout America have endorsed this concept. A number of the States and communities are beginning to move down the path toward coherent systemic education reform. But the road is long and difficult, and it is often fragmented. Because we believe there is great promise and that the need is critical, we want to put the support and leadership of the Federal Government into this reform movement.

Another key to success is to build partnerships with the institutions of America involved in education—with States, school dis-

tricts, schools, colleges, business and labor—to improve education for all of our students.

In the Department of Education, we can help by convening and mobilizing attention to reform, by improving our own management, and perhaps more importantly, by creating less Federal red tape and paying more attention to teaching and learning, the very heart and soul of education.

One way to do this is to concentrate on reform for all students in all districts, especially those most in need. You cannot change national averages or the percentages of students meeting certain goals by having a few pilot projects tightly dictated by Federal regulations in a few schools. The American system of elementary and secondary education is comprised of 57 States and territories, 15,000 school districts, over 100,000 schools, and more than 2 million classrooms. The Federal Government needs to energize, excite and facilitate advances in education in all of these locations and with family, community and educator support.

Cicero talked of "partnerships for the common good." That's what we now need in education. We need to create sufficient momentum and a critical mass for renewal and reform in education. The beauty of the American laboratory of democracy is that the solutions of how to accomplish these needed advances can be different from community to community and from State to State. That is a plus, not a minus.

The final key to successful education progress is building partnerships with those people who care deeply about education—families and students, teachers and professors, administrators, school and college board members, individual business people, and citizens all. We have begun to reach out to them, and they have been very, very responsive.

Because it is only with the help of these influences that all of America's youth will be encouraged to live by what Bill Clinton calls the "ethic of learning" which is so essential to meet challenging standards.

A first critical step to begin on this journey to improve education in America is to establish a framework across the great country to allow all of us to work together toward common goals. The legislation I am discussing with you today will help provide that framework. We will have a specific legislative package ready for you shortly. We plan to call it "Goals 2000: Educate America Act."

Let me now run through the essential components of that legislation.

We must have national goals to move the entire system of American education forward. The legislation makes the National Education Goals a matter of formal national policy. It establishes the National Education Goals Panel in law with the full partnership of Congress on the panel. We will achieve only that for which we aim, so the goals are very important.

The long-term mentor of Martin Luther King, Dr. Benjamin Mayes, was born in difficult circumstances in my State of South Carolina almost 100 years ago. Dr. Mayes died a couple of years ago, as you all recall. His grandfather was a former slave; his father was a sharecropper. In his later years, Dr. Mayes became a

very close friend of mine and an inspiration to me and many others.

He once advised young people who had little hope, in a book that he had written, that "the greatest tragedy in life is not failing to reach your goals; the greatest tragedy is having no goals to reach." All of our students, all of the young people in this country need to aim for what the rest of the world aims for, or we are shortchanging our children, our families and our future.

We must challenge all of our students to meet rigorous, internationally competitive standards.

The legislation also establishes a distinguished council to certify the academic content standards and assessments are of the highest quality possible. These voluntary standards will set out what students should know and should be able to do. The voluntary assessments will be used to determine whether students have mastered the content standards of the highest quality.

The task of developing content standards has begun. As you know, the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics has led the way by establishing rigorous content standards as to what our students should know and be able to do in elementary and secondary math. In recent years, similar efforts have begun in other subject areas by States and national curriculum groups. We must continue to build upon these ongoing efforts to establish standards in math, science, English and language arts, geography, history, the arts and foreign languages that will be the envy of all the world.

The council will provide a voluntary process for affixing a "Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" to national and State efforts to set challenging standards and assessments. This will help parents, taxpayers, employers, and others understand that students in their communities are aiming as high as other students anywhere else in the country or in the world.

This board of prestigious Americans will provide an essential service to this country. It will consider the fundamental issues about what our children should learn as they go through our Nation's schools. The certified standards will be voluntary, but they will also set critical benchmarks for all of our States and communities.

A similar board will, as Secretary Reich discusses, stimulate and guide the development of voluntary occupational skill standards.

Building a world class American work force first starts with building a world class American education system. A new generation of workers prepared for high-skill, high-wage jobs will primarily come from a restructured American education system that produces students with a firm grounding in core academic subjects and are equipped with skills that have currency in the labor market. The crucial task for us and the Department of Labor will be to build a new school-to-work transition system in America.

I am deeply committed to working with Secretary Reich in building this new system. Our staffs are working together on almost a daily basis to develop a proposal. A crucial component of this proposal is how both national education standards and occupational standards will fit into this new system. At the broad level, any occupational skill standard can be broken down into a set of aca-

demic competencies. So as we proceed, we will need to continually remind ourselves of the important overlap between the two efforts.

In addition, occupational standards, like academic standards, will have a powerful effect on the curriculum development at the secondary and postsecondary levels.

As important as goals and standards are, they alone are not enough. We must also find ways of ensuring that students have an available opportunity to learn and an educational environment to succeed. To accomplish this purpose, the legislation establishes an Opportunity to Learn Commission. They will develop voluntary standards to address such issues as: the capability of teachers to provide quality instruction in their areas; the extent to which teachers and administrators have continuing and ready access to the best knowledge about teaching and learning and how to make needed school changes, and the quality and availability of challenging curricula geared to meet world class standards.

If the Nation is going to meet these challenging educational goals by the year 2000, we must help our States accelerate the pace of educational reform.

A fourth component of the legislation sets in motion a 10-year nationwide challenge to all States and through them to school districts and schools to develop and implement action strategies helping all students achieve world class standards. Federal grant money will be available to help accomplish this purpose.

To assist with this process, each State will be asked to convene a broad-based, representative panel of leaders. With grassroots input and advice, they will analyze what needs to be done in their State to help their students achieve world class standards and help implement the action plans.

Each State will work with selected school districts and schools to combine the strength of bottom-up reform with coordinated reform from the top. The districts and States would work together to figure out ways of preparing well-trained teachers to teach the content standards, to develop and design high-quality curriculum materials that reflect the standards, and to create assessments which really measure what students are taught.

This indeed is a very important time for our country. Improved education for all Americans must be the driving force which moves us forward. This legislation will be the road map for our educational future.

Someone reminded the other day of one of Yogi Berra's lines. He said, "When you come to a fork in the road, take it." We are not at a fork in the road in this country. We are at a crossroads. Robert Frost talked of roads when he said taking the road less travelled would make all the difference. What President Clinton, Secretary Reich and I are proposing is taking us in a new direction, a bold and honest change for the future. The President asks us to take a road less travelled, and believe me, it will make all the difference to our children and our schools for generations to come.

We certainly welcome your support to rapidly enact systemic school reform legislation, as well as companion school-to-work measures. After all, we are talking about achieving goals for the year 2000, and we are already in 1993.

By enacting the legislation rapidly, serious reform can begin next school year in all the States and in a number of school districts and schools. Then, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act and the reauthorization of OERI can take place with this framework of goals and challenging standards in mind for all students.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, together, I think we can design a new partnership role for the Federal Government in education reform and school-to-work transition. It will be a partnership for the common good, and it can make all the difference.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Before proceeding with Secretary Reich, I want to acknowledge the presence of and welcome Mrs. Riley, who is here as well today. She has been very much involved in many different areas of education policy and other public policy questions, and we are delighted to have her here.

Secretary Reich.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT B. REICH, SECRETARY, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, WASHINGTON, DC

Secretary REICH. Chairman Kennedy, Senator Kassebaum, members of the committee, it is a delight for me as well to be back here, talking about something that is so close to my heart, close to Secretary Riley's heart, obviously, and to the President's.

The reason you are seeing both of us here, the reason that this sadly is unusual, but we hope is not going to be unusual in the future, is that we really regard this issue as intertwined—the work force, the workplace, education and training. We are talking, fundamentally, about a seamless system going from earliest years—a child who, even before attending school, is prepared for school, all the way through a lifetime of training and retraining.

The workplace of the future is very different from the workplace of the past. What was fine 10 or 15 or 20 years ago is no longer adequate.

What we are seeing increasingly is that 75 percent of our workers, those without college degrees, find themselves losing ground. If you don't have a college degree these days, you tend to be on a very slow track. In fact, most of our workers without college degrees are actually seeing themselves poorer in inflation-adjusted terms than they were 10 or 15 years ago.

There is a great deal of academic debate about why this has occurred. Some blame international trade and the fact that now, our uneducated and relatively unskilled workers are in competition with millions of people around the world, the vast majority of whom would be delighted to work for a small fraction of American wages.

But I venture to say that even without international trade, technology itself is replacing a lot of unskilled workers. Automated teller machines are replacing bank tellers. Automated gas station attendants are replacing the old human gas station attendants. Even in our service sectors, we are seeing more and more machinery.

Technology is not our enemy, however. International trade is not our enemy—if we are prepared for both international trade and technology, if we have the skills, if we have the abilities.

Those in this country with the skills and the abilities, those with college degrees, over the longer term of the past 15 years have done well—perhaps not as well as they did in the 1960's and 1970's—and to be sure, they got hit in the current and recent recession. It was a white collar recession. But overall, over the long-term, if you have the skills, if you have the training, if you have a college degree—which in this country is the signal for having that skill and that training—then you are on an upward escalator. If you don't, you are on a downward escalator.

Now, this seamless system of education and training that we are talking about is very much at the center of the President's economic agenda. When the President talked the other night about investing in the future, he is talking about investing primarily in the key assets of America. The key asset is our work force, is our people. Everything else moves across international boundaries very easily. What is rooted here? Well, the asset is us, our capacities to work together, our capacities to be productive and innovative.

Unless we invest in those capacities, we are not going to have high real incomes, high standards of living in the future, nor will our children.

Secretary Riley and I and our staffs are beginning a process. We hope to work with you over the coming years. It is not going to be easy. It is not going to be a magical, instant turnaround. Expectations are very high, but this is going to take time. When you are dealing with these kinds of issues, it will take time.

One piece of the answer, one step in the right direction, is to establish standards not only with regard to primary and secondary, or secondary school, but also with regard to broad areas of occupational competency. I want to emphasize that these are voluntary standards. These are standards that no one has to attain. But by creating a system of voluntary national standards in areas of occupational skills and competencies, what we do in effect is create the possibility that the noncollege graduate gains a credential that shows potential employers a degree of mastery.

Right now, our two-tier work force only has basically two credentials—a college degree, only about 25 percent of our population getting it; and then a high school degree which, unfortunately, often does not signal very much. It certainly signals certain degrees of competence, but with the help of national educational standards, the high school degree will signal much more. But in between, we don't have nearly the signals that other nations have of a degree of competence and attainment.

Technical standards, standards that signal a certain degree of proficiency has been attained, would provide that signal. It is voluntary—nobody has to take these exams, nobody has to meet these standards—but at least provides an opportunity for young people who are not going on to college to get training, to gain competence, to show employers that they have achieved this national standard level.

It also provides employers with a signal. As I said, employers right now, when all they have is a college degree or a high school

degree, don't know about competencies. It provides a national signal. One of the keys here is that it is portable; it is across borders. It serves as kind of a framework for a lot of the work that has been going on already.

Many States are already actively involved. Many industries are already actively involved. We certainly don't recommend anything that constrains innovation. No. This provides a framework within which industries and States and locales, community colleges, technical institutions can work together to achieve certain broad areas of technical competence.

The principles, I want to repeat, are number one, that they be voluntary, these areas of skill competence, these standards; second, that the private sector have a very active role, that the private sector assert a great deal of leadership. Obviously, it is important because you don't want standards where there are no jobs waiting for people who attain them.

No. 3, that these standards knit together, that they integrate a great deal of work that is already going on, but it is going on in a variety of different places, and it doesn't have the kind of coherence that it would have if there were national standards.

No. 4, that they be free of bias. Obviously, we want to make sure that there is no discrimination that is build in unintentionally, or obviously intentionally.

And five, that they be national in the sense that they be portable, that they be recognized. You can get training in Tennessee, and you can use it in Maine. It doesn't matter where you get it.

To get this work under way, we propose the creation of a National Skill Standards Board to unite representatives of business, labor, education, and others with a stake in the development of the American work force and the expertise to contribute.

The board would be charged with stimulating the development and guiding the adoption of these skill standards and certification programs. We need a national policy to unite the relevant partners, to develop these voluntary competency-based standards.

Finally, the board could play a pivotal role in ensuring and assuring that skill standards are disseminated widely, that they are updated promptly, that they are accepted broadly across the private sector.

Now, putting together an effective system of skill standards and certification will provide one element of the foundation for ongoing lifelong learning, enhancing America's ability to productively match skills and jobs. It will help create this in-between tier of technical workers, of paraprofessional workers that we in this country don't have and other countries do have. It will help us to regain the possibility of upward mobility for many of our kids who do not go on to college.

I look forward to working with you. I look forward to working with my old friend, Secretary Riley. We are going to make this a team effort, and again, it is a team effort not only because we know each other and like each other and have worked with each other for many years before, and we know many of you, but also it is a team effort because substantively these issues all fit together and must fit together if we are going to create a true system of lifetime learning.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Reich follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT B. REICH

Chairman Kennedy, Senator Kassebaum, members of the committee: I am pleased to appear before you today to underscore the significance of skill standards in the administration's long-term strategy to restore American economic vitality.

I am particularly pleased to be here with Secretary of Education Riley. The crucial task of improving the skills of the American work force means creating a new partnership between the world of education and the world of work. The Department of Labor will be collaborating closely with the Department of Education to help lay the foundation for a badly needed school-to-work transition system, and we expect to be back here soon to lay out our joint, comprehensive school-to-work program.

There is much to be done. Right now, there not only is a chasm between school and work, but the entire American economy suffers from the mismatch between skills and jobs. To turn this around, we have to acknowledge that the development of work force skills is an ongoing process, one that begins in the earliest grades and continues through a worker's training and re-training.

We also have to face facts: the American system of education and training does not serve the needs of noncollege bound students as well as it should. As the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce concluded in its report, America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages, "America may have the worst school-to-work transition system of any advanced industrial country." As a consequence, less-educated and unskilled Americans are often forced into low-paying, dead-end jobs. So while the wages and benefits of college-educated Americans have been steadily increasing, most students entering the work force without a college education are finding their wages, benefits and working conditions declining rapidly. Short of a college degree, there is no way that someone can signal to an employer that they possess world-class skills.

America's economic future increasingly depends on the skills and abilities of all its workers. Our national capacity to sustain high wages and to raise living standards rests upon the productivity of a world-class work force. As the experience of many leading American firms demonstrates, effective performance also depends on jobs and organizations that maximize the skills of front-line workers and structure workplace responsibilities to make the most of those skills.

We must commit ourselves to a major campaign of investment in the skills of the American work force. But without a method of measuring those skills, we run the risk of squandering that investment. We must develop a system of skill standards to gauge the effectiveness of our system of lifelong learning.

In developing a skill standards system, we will be taking advantage of the significant contributions that have already been made by business, labor, educators and the States. Likewise, let me thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your leadership on this issue. This work, combined with the efforts of the Education and Labor Departments, has provided some very important indications about the role and structure of skill standards.

Broadly defined skill standards form the cornerstone of our work force development system. When connected to educational standards, they will help create a seamless system of lifelong learning opportunities, with certificates of mastery and competency that are accepted and rewarded by employers. The United States is the only industrialized nation without a formal system for developing and disseminating skill standards. The missing piece is a major one. With such standards:

Students entering the labor force will have better information on the skill requirements or competencies required to compete effectively for high-wage jobs.

Businesses will have the information they need to hire highly skilled (but not necessarily college-educated) workers. Without performance-based, educational and competency standards, it is now difficult for employers to assess the skills of applicants and employees. This is particularly difficult for small or medium-sized businesses, which cannot afford to develop their own skills assessment systems.

There will be accountability among training providers, because there will be measurable standards for evaluation. Businesses are often reluctant to hire new graduates because firms are unfamiliar with or simply do not trust existing academic or training credentials.

Jobless Americans can seek retraining with confidence that the skills they gain will lead to new employment opportunities.

Unions can better determine what skills and training are vital to their members' employment security.

As a nation, we can set goals for skill achievement, competencies, and performance that can drive American economic growth.

The most immediate use of skill standards is to ease the school-to-work transition, but this cornerstone will eventually support a more expansive structure. A national system of voluntary skill standards and certification will make training programs more coherent and accountable for new entrants seeking first jobs, displaced and other workers seeking new jobs, and employees seeking better jobs. A skill standards system will provide the clarity and coherence needed to integrate the too-often chaotic elements of our training and education system.

A skill standards system is an idea whose time has come and whose way has been paved in the thinking and organizing already under way both inside and outside of government. The Departments of Labor and Education have determined, through public hearings, comments, and other research that there is consensus in support of national standards among eight stakeholder groups—government education, industry, organized labor, joint labor-management committees, community-based organizations, private citizens, and service providers.

We will build this system around four basic principles.

First, skill standards must be voluntary; they should not be and cannot become government mandates or requirements.

Second, skill standards must be designed with private sector leadership, including both employers and employees. The private sector simply knows better than anyone else what constitute the requirements for top-quality competency and performance. A skill standard without relevance to the work world has no value.

Third, the process must knit together and integrate, but not duplicate, much of the work already carried out in industry, by States, or by the education system.

Fourth, the standards must be free from gender, racial, and other bias. They must be inclusive and not exclusive for all individuals.

There is also clear, broad-based support for the Federal Government to act as a catalyst in the development of voluntary, industry-based skill standards. The Departments of Labor and Education have begun this task through an on-going process of public dialogue, the funding of demonstration projects, and the development of technical assistance and research efforts.

But the time has come to get beyond the experiments and begin the work of building a national system. To get this work under way, we propose the creation of a National Skill Standards Board to unite representatives of business, labor, education and others with a stake in the development of the American work force and the expertise to contribute. Private sector representatives—employer and employee—would form the majority.

The board would be charged with stimulating the development and guiding the adoption of skill standards and certification. We need a national policy to unite the relevant partners to develop voluntary, competency-based standards. Finally, the Board could play a pivotal role in assuring that skill standards are disseminated widely, updated promptly and accepted broadly across the private sector.

Putting together an effective system of skill standards and certification will provide the foundation for ongoing lifelong learning, and enhance America's ability to productively match skills and jobs. I look forward to working with this committee as we move ahead.

This concludes my prepared remarks. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We'll follow a 15-minute time allocation for questions.

First of all, Secretary Riley, when do you think we will have the legislation? Can you give us your best judgment in terms of when you think the administration will submit the legislation?

Secretary RILEY. Mr. Chairman, we are working actively almost around-the-clock for the past week or so, and the best statement I could make is that it will be very soon. I don't know the exact day, but we are working with OMB and the White House, and then we'll certainly want to work with staffs here, but it will be very soon.

The CHAIRMAN. So we're talking days rather than months?

Secretary RILEY. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. I left out "week." [Laughter.] Also, you mentioned the SEA and OERI? Do you see this legislation having some impact on those pieces of legislation as well?

Secretary RILEY. Yes, sir, I surely do, and I think that's why this two-track approach makes so much sense. That is to get in place this framework of goals and high standards and national assessment and all of the parts along with the occupational standards, and then, as this committee and others begin work on the reauthorization of those two very important education acts, have this framework, then, to funnel the resources and the thinking into to get the very important power of this country moving into this framework, making a very strong force for improvement of education.

The CHAIRMAN. I am reminded by staff that given the large turnout of the members—this is the largest turnout of both Republican and Democrat members—that it would be a very considerable session if we did 15-minutes, so we'll adjust that to 10 minutes.

Let me ask you, Secretary Reich, a number of us had requested the GAO to do a study of the various training programs, and we see the 127 programs out there, and we know the importance of trying to bring those programs together. We have talked about this privately. I am just wondering, as the Congress is addressing these issues, and asking why are we trying to go down this road when we've got these other training programs that are already out; why aren't we really focusing on that first before we try to deal with this kind of approach—which I find very compelling, and which I support. How do you respond to that?

Secretary REICH. Mr. Chairman, actually, skill standards are a way of integrating all these various programs. They provide focal points. Right now, we have programs not only spread across the Federal Government, but also at the State and even at the local level, but people don't know what they are being trained for, there is some overlap, and there is some duplication. By creating standards, you create criteria, you bring the communities together, and you in fact create the possibility for a far more integrated and coherent system.

Now, that's not the end of it. As we have talked about and as I said in my confirmation hearing, I would like to at the Federal level begin to bring the Federal programs together into a system of one-stop shopping so that regardless of the cause of your joblessness, you still were eligible for certain kinds of training and certain kinds of benefits. But that in no way is inconsistent, in fact in many ways would be helped by the creation of these broad-based skill standards.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, I think the idea of comprehensiveness which is reflected in your joint appearance; we had even given thought to having Secretary Shalala here today as well, because of the health implications and their importance in terms of education, and the kind of comprehensiveness which I know all of you feel is important, and we certainly do as well.

Secretary Riley, let me ask you how this really reflects into a single school or a school district? When we get this passed and hopefully implemented in the way that you have conceptualized it today, if you were a small school in South Carolina, could you sort

of track it a little bit in regard to a small school that has a group of teachers who have heard about this and who say, "That's for us," and who want to work with the parents, and want to work outside, and perhaps not get trapped in the status quo that may exist out there; which lessens the opportunity for this kind of coordinated approach? How do you see a school district in any part of this country, just in very broad strokes, taking advantage of this kind of opportunity once it has been implemented? And then maybe Secretary Reich could comment as well.

Secretary RILEY. Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, we have over 100,000 schools out there, and we see this use of innovative thinking stimulated by an approach here that would have high standards, goals, an assessment process that would be making sure everyone was working along those lines, but having the freedom to have things moving and improving in each school on a different basis.

The grants program, of course, would mean an action plan would be developed on the State level that would then be approved by the council that would have very distinguished, respected people on it. This action plan would go down to the school districts and to the schools, and then they would in turn, then, be part of this process. So we see the State, then, looking at each district and the districts looking at the schools to see that the same kind of action is taking place that would then funnel into these high goals and standards.

So we think it will be very clear. It will take a little time to get all of this moving. The money that we are requesting would, over 80 percent of it by the third year, be down at the local level or the school level.

The CHAIRMAN. I think that is certainly encouraging.

Secretary Reich, maybe you could describe how you see the occupational standards and the educational standards sort of fitting together at the local level. What would this really mean in terms of the students? We are talking in pretty broad strokes here, and I think some of us have a pretty good awareness of this concept. A lot of this developed in the America's Choice program, and we have had some hearings, and a number of people have been active in it, Senator Bingaman, Senator Pell, and others on both sides of the aisle, in terms of the goals panel, and we tried to address this to some extent in the last couple of years.

I think one of the questions is how, in a practical manner, you see some of the occupational standards and the educational standards really coming together at the local level so that a student would really have the sense that staying in school really is meaningful. Too many of them drop out because they don't feel it is relevant.

Can you tell us a little bit about that?

Secretary REICH. Mr. Chairman, I see the skill standards offering a way for the noncollegebound student, who either can't afford it or does not feel that he or she wants to go on to a regular four-year university, to utilize either the community college system, technical college system, or proprietary college system in a way that gives more guidance to those students as to what they are actually buying, what they are getting, because they can see that industry has helped to create specific areas of competence that indus-

try feels it needs, so they know in effect what kind of training they will get.

It also helps guidance counselors. In high schools, a lot of guidance counselors are now primarily occupied with telling the top tier of students what college to go to. Well, it provides a very powerful signalling mechanism to the high school guidance counseling community as to what kinds of skill competencies are in demand, where you can get the best training for those skill competencies. It gives students who are not going on to college a career path, a potential career route, with training, and a certification at the end.

Again, this is voluntary, but at the local level, it again provides a framework and a direction for a lot of the students who simply are not going to go on to college.

The CHAIRMAN. We have seen some of this work, have we not, particularly in the apprenticeship programs in the building trades.

Secretary REICH. Yes. The certified apprenticeship programs in the building trades have worked extraordinarily well, and the unions are justifiably very proud of what they have accomplished.

We are suggesting building on that same concept and expanding it beyond the certified apprenticeships into a much larger framework.

I should mention that the Department of Labor and the Department of Education have already begun working with various industry groups in pilot projects and demonstration projects. For example, the American Electronics Association has been developing a standard for electronics for, again, not necessarily a college degree, but almost an electronics curriculum, a public/private curriculum, in which students who are not necessarily going on to college could gain certification in this field and therefore be able to say to future employers, and show future employers a degree of competence, a certification in this broad field of electronics.

We have senior computer executives, corporate executives, at Motorola, Siemens, Apple Computer, IBM, Digital, Hewlett-Packard and others who are actively engaged right now in trying to formulate what that electronics standard and that certification might look like.

The CHAIRMAN. Finally, what is your own sense, briefly, from both of you, in terms of the degree of support for this concept in the private sector, among workers, and among the governmental agencies you have talked about? What kind of sense of support do you get for this kind of approach as you travel around the country?

Secretary RILEY. Well, it is very strong, Mr. Chairman. We talk about middle income people and poor people and wealthy people, and whatever category you talk about, every category of person, every family, is concerned about their children's education, their own education, their future, their children's future. Business clearly understands that their future is 100 percent tied to the capacity of this country to educate the human resources.

I find that it is there, and virtually every citizen has that great interest. What we are interested in doing is channeling that force into a sensible, high standard direction.

Secretary REICH. Mr. Chairman, Americans, I believe—and the polls show this, and certainly in my conversations, the evidence is unassailable—Americans are worried about the future of their chil-

dren. They are worried that their children may not be living as well as they are living. They are worried about education and training and the competencies that their children are getting in a very different global environment from the global environment in which most parents and most grandparents today were brought up.

We also know that input standards, standards that dictate from the top down what you have to do and by when, are often less effective than output standards. The kind of standards that we are talking about are competence standards, standards that set a minimal level and provide a focal point.

As I talk to community colleges, leaders of technical colleges, vocational institutions, as I talk with not only educators but business leaders—I had dinner last night with a group of corporate executives talking about this very matter—I hear again and again the same refrain: Give us some leadership. Give us a framework. We are all working. We are all desperately concerned about this issue. We don't want top-down big government, but we do want a framework. We want some direction. We want a system in which we can work and know that our work is being elaborated upon, and that is precisely what we are talking about today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Kassebaum.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, speaking of inputs and outputs, let me just pursue that a minute, perhaps with you first, Secretary Riley. We debated S. 2 last year and the standards issue as far as what, would be required in input measures, and whether there be standards regarding class size and teacher qualifications that would determine outcomes. Does this concern you as far as getting into Federal micro-management in order to help meet some of these standards that we are trying to lay out?

Secretary RILEY. Senator Kassebaum, it would concern me if we got into micro-management. We feel very seriously—and we have really thought about this, and I know you all had serious debate on this input issue—we used to all talk about accreditation, and we realized, finally, that no matter how much regulation you had on reaching accreditation, the important thing, as Secretary Reich points out, is the output and the results.

However, there is a certain level of input that would have to be expected if you are going to ask someone to reach high standards. And what we call this area is creation of an Opportunity to Learn Commission which, as I pointed out, is not going to be into talking about micro matters on the school level, but basic, important teaching and learning capacities, broader-type standards for input, the capability of teachers to provide quality instruction, the quality and availability of a challenging curriculum—all of these broad, but input-type features, which would then say if you have this kind of opportunity to learn, then the young people in this setting should be able to reach these high standards.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Many States, as you know, including South Carolina, Kansas, and many other States, are implementing similar initiatives now, particularly if they have an innovative State board of education. Do you contemplate working through those

State boards of education? You mentioned that each State would have a panel of leaders, that I assume would be separate.

Secretary RILEY. Yes. Well, it depends on which part of the overall program you would be looking at. The council, which would deal with standards and assessment, would be appointed by the goals panel—and I'm sure you all are familiar with the goals panel makeup. This council, then, would certify State standards which would be somewhat different from State to State, but calibrated on this national level, working with them, providing support, helping them develop their standards, and then their assessment mechanisms, again, differing from State to State, but having a national calibration to see that they were the same high standards.

Then, as you go from that to the State standards, the Opportunity to Learn standards, and you go to the grants program—I am looking at the connections between the Federal and the State, and the grants program is the key place that they would come together—that is where the State would request funds for a certain package of plans and implementation of those plans—that would have to be, in answer to your question, worked through the chief State school officer and the governor, working closely together.

Again, we are trying to design this where it will cause people to work together. We think that is extremely important for the governor and the State school officer to work closely together and for them, then, as a State to send these plans up, and we would work with them on the Federal level to have them approved.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Have you given any thought to whether there would be any weighting for those low-performing areas or higher-level poverty districts?

Secretary RILEY. That would certainly be a first priority, in my judgment. I don't think that the legislation specifically calls for that, but it certainly would be first priority.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Secretary Reich, I'd like to ask you about a quote that you made this week or last week, that "everybody is entitled to one free year." I assume you mean one free year of education or training after high school for a noncollegebound student. Is this one free year of technical training—or was that taken out of context?

Secretary REICH. I believe, Senator, that that was taken from a talk I gave on Monday, in which I prefaced my remarks—one has to always be very, very careful in this town——

Senator KASSEBAUM. Oh, yes, I understand that. [Laughter.]

Secretary REICH. I prefaced my remarks by saying this was one preliminary view, a preliminary notion, as a model of how we might want to go at the State and Federal level, but that no one should take it for anything more than a very, very preliminary kind of set of notions.

What I had in mind—and again, there is always a danger in talking about these, because you get ahead of where you ought to be and where all the staff and all the thinking is—what I had in mind was that obviously we do, as a society, as a Nation, spend quite a lot on the college-educated. We have all sorts of systems and all sorts of ways in which we subsidize college education, and that's good. We have one of the best university and college education—in fact, I think we have the best system, virtually the best

system, of higher education in the world. But with regard to people who are not going on to college—and again, 75 percent of our kids don't graduate from college—we might want to do some thinking about how we can provide them with a bridge from school to work.

We may have the best system of higher education in the world, but we probably have among the worst systems among any industrialized Nation of bridging from school to work.

The standards that we are talking about today provide a method by which that bridge could be constructed, one piece of that bridge. At other times, I hope to be talking about and hope to work with you and other members of this committee on other pieces of that bridge. I know that Chairman Kennedy and others on this panel have devoted a lot of time and attention to thinking about what that bridge might look like.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Well, I would certainly agree with you on enhancing the professionalism of technical skills. I think that, as you say, for too long in secondary education, it has always been regarded as something that you do if you can't do anything else. And I think we are beginning to recognize the importance of that, and I'm glad I gave you a chance to clarify what you might have been thinking about until you can put forward an actual initiative.

But I would also like to ask about the apprenticeship concept, which often is mentioned in comparison to what Germany is doing. As you know, in Germany, the apprenticeship program there is one run by businesses who offer subminimum wage to workers who are participating in the apprenticeship program. Would you be supportive of that type of initiative?

Secretary REICH. I would not at this point want to commit myself with regard to the subminimum wage, but let me make just a few references to the German system as I understand it, and I have studied it for a few years, as it might be relevant here.

Obviously, the German system is quite different. It is built on a fundamentally different economy, an economy that is premised in turn on 17th and 18th century guild systems. We don't have that here, and it's probably a good thing we don't have that here.

On the other hand, we have to acknowledge that average real wages in Germany, in the former West Germany, that is, are higher than they are in the United States. And I am amazed by the number of companies I've talked with recently, American companies—not global companies, but American-based companies—who say they are going to Germany even though the wages are higher, and I ask them why, and they say because the skills are higher, and it is worth it to go to Germany.

You have to ask yourself what is there about that German system. A far fewer percentage of German young people complete what we would consider to be a four-year college degree, but they do have a system in place to provide technical competencies to young people who are not going on to the colleges. Those are curricula and internships, to put it in American vernacular; they are school and internships created by both the educational community and the business community working together.

So in a sense, I think we have to—and again, I don't want to get ahead of myself, and this is something that I hope to return to at a different point in the discussion with this committee—but I think

we do have to think about how to take the best of that German system and adapt it along with our own unique advantages and opportunities here to creating another path for the noncollege student.

Senator KASSEBAUM. I would certainly agree with you that we need to offer alternative career paths. But I think what is really troubling today in the workplace is the uncertainty about where that career path leads. And I speak with real heartfelt interest in this because my home town of Wichita, KA has just seen 6,000 layoffs at Boeing, where there are a number of engineers. This is a skilled work force that is out looking for jobs and for many of them, when they reach age 40, it is very hard to find somewhere else to go. I think that is a component of this issue that we cannot forget. So I don't know that it is enough to focus on just skills today. It is the restructuring that is taking place and how we work within that framework as well.

Secretary REICH. If I may respond, Senator, because I think this is a terribly important point. Secretary Riley and I are talking about the—if you would pardon the expression—supply side of the equation with regard to ensuring that the human capital is there to perform whatever skills the private sector needs. But on the demand side, you are absolutely correct—we have to have workplaces that utilize people, not just college-educated people, but also noncollege-educated people, and give them upwardly mobile career paths, and also continuously retrain people.

We can have the best retraining programs in the world on a Federal level; we can have career centers and job centers; we can have a consolidation of all of our training programs, one-stop shopping, but if the private sector is not going to also provide on-the-job training and continuous upgrading for all of its workers, then a lot of that is for nought. It has to be public sector/private sector.

In a way, I wish Secretary Brown were sitting next to me because the reformulation of the workplace is a critical aspect of everything we are talking about.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Metzenbaum.

Senator METZENBAUM. Secretary Reich, last Congress, I worked hard to pass the Nontraditional Employment for Women Act, known as NEW. The NEW Act was designed to encourage efforts to train and place women in nontraditional employment through the Job Training Partnership Act.

In your testimony today you stated—and I agree with you entirely—that the standards we are discussing must be free from gender, racial and other bias. The skill standards we are talking about will involve many jobs which have traditionally been male-dominated.

Given the increasing percentage of women in our work force, I think it is important that we encourage women to go into these occupations.

The question I have for you is what can we do to make sure that women are not excluded from nontraditional occupations? For example, do you agree that we should commit a portion of training funds to encourage women to be trained for and placed in nontraditional jobs?

Secretary REICH. I do agree, Senator, that we have to do everything we can to make sure that women don't feel that their options are constrained; that young women feel they can go into any kind of profession or any kind of job and get any kind of technical training they want.

I am not sure that I would want to specifically earmark specific segments of training funds. I want to examine that. That may be a good idea. I just simply want to examine it first and come back to you with that.

But let me say that one critical juncture here is at the high school guidance counseling, vocational and college guidance counseling area, because if we have—and again, this is where everything comes together—if we have areas of competency, if we have skill standards there so that high school and vocational counselors can say to young women, "Look, here is an electronics career path with a certification right there; you have demonstrated a lot of interest in mathematics and science. This is something you might want to pursue." There is a certificate at the end, and a lot of industry has built that standard. There are jobs waiting for people who get that certificate. This enables and could enable young women, for example, to actually direct themselves in a career path that has been dominated by young men.

The standards provide avenues, in other words, which can work against patterns of discrimination—unintentional discrimination—that have built up over the years.

Senator METZENBAUM. Let me ask you another question. Yesterday the Washington Post reported that you are considering a program to offer students who do not go on to college a year of job training in one of a number of broad fields of competence. Do you envision applying the same standards to both those who have this posthigh school year of training and those who are trained under the Federal dislocated worker programs?

Secretary REICH. Well, this is the last time I give very preliminary notions in public. Senator Kassebaum mentioned precisely the same speech. It would seem to me, again, that we need to have the possibility open for anybody—a dislocated worker or somebody who needs a bridge to an occupation who is not going on to a 4-year college degree—we need to provide that opportunity to get a certification so that employers know that that person is certified.

It may be that this is someone who has a great deal of skill in a very different area, but that very different area is no longer in demand, and that person wants to show future employers that not only is he or she capable in that old obsolete area, but has the skills necessary to begin a very different career path.

Again I want to emphasize, employers these days are using the college degree as a proxy for knowing that this is the kind of person in whom it is worthwhile to invest on-the-job training. Well, a lot of jobs that are now going to people with college degrees really don't have to go to people with college degrees. We need to provide another signal to employers in terms of the kinds of people in whom it is worthwhile for those employers to invest in on-the-job training, and this certification and skill standards program is exactly that. It is a step. It is not the entire answer, but it is a step toward providing a very different kind of signal.

Senator METZENBAUM. What I like about your program is that it is visionary. There is no question about it. But it is the kind of pragmatism that you have brought to it that I think is very, very exciting.

And Secretary Riley, I would say that as Governor of South Carolina, you initiated a comprehensive and highly successful educational reform plan. You've got a track record behind you.

How would a Federal initiative such as we are discussing have been helpful to your efforts to bring about school reform in South Carolina?

Secretary RILEY. The mid-1980's was a time when we really were talking a lot about reform; we were getting into results orientation. We were getting into accountability, fair funding, realistic approach to things, better teacher education, more active public support, business involvement, parent involvement in the schools—all of those things. And you will hear people say that some of that had an effect and some did not. I think it all had a good effect. I think the more action you have going and the interest of parents and business people, labor, all the different aspects of life, the better it is.

The fact is that then we get out of the so-called reform into kind of a restructuring mode, and none of these things are specific, but generally looking, then, more than really we had the opportunity of even thinking about at that time into more site-based management—we moved a lot of the decisionmaking to the school site. But now we are looking at lots of different options to get more creative thinking out there, some choice opportunities on the local level within the public schools, a charter school concept, all kinds of encouragement on the local level to have innovative and creative thoughts.

All of this, Senator, is within this high level of standards and that as your overall goal, which is kind of a bottom-up, top-down approach. This business of systemic education reform—and I know that sounds rather bureaucratic, and I wish we had another word other than "systemic"—but it is very clear as to what it means, and it means, as I said, that all the pieces fit. And while you have all this creativity going on in a teacher's classroom or wherever, you have in sync these goals and high standards, and all of it fits together, from teacher training through textbooks through curricula and so forth.

So it is really a change kind of from a reform to a restructuring, and this is the framework for that restructuring.

Senator METZENBAUM. Sounds good. The education reform legislation considered by the Senate last year included provisions which focused on schools serving large numbers of poor children, to ensure that these schools would be able to implement reform plans. How do you propose to ensure the participation of schools with the greatest needs, the less successful schools, the inner city schools that have the greatest challenges? How will you go about implementing that so it will not just be a program that helps the "haves" but also concerns itself with the "have-nots"?

Secretary RILEY. Senator, that's a great interest of mine, and I would say in this country, I don't know if there is a greater need. It is really more than a school problem, as you and I know. It is

often a community structure problem. It is outside the school problems that then make it very difficult to have a good learning environment on the inside of the school.

The fact is that by moving down the activity, starting with this work we are talking about, but then having the States having their own implementation plan—they would work, then, with their school districts and the schools for their implementation plans—we push the funds down—as I indicated to Senator Kennedy, some 80 percent of the funds go down to the local school level after 3 years, after we get it in place. That's where you would have from the State and from the local school board level a direct involvement and attention to those urban schools that are having some special problems.

I don't think that we could do anything any more important than to try to impact those communities. Again, Bill Clinton talks about getting poor parents to have this ethic for learning. If we could do that, that alone would have tremendous power and effect. So if we can push this attention on this level and stir that kind of interest—and I plan to be involved in that myself—I think it can make a tremendous difference in this country.

Senator METZENBAUM. It's a big challenge. I hope you are successful.

Secretary RILEY. Thank you.

Senator METZENBAUM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Jeffords.

Senator JEFFORDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, it is really a pleasure to see you both sitting together at the table here today. As the chairman pointed out, I was reminiscing back to when we established the Department of Education, which I believe was during the Carter years, and I suggested that we ought to take Secretary Reich's educational programs and give them to you. That received a universal, enthusiastic response, but it was all very negative, and when it came time to get a vote on it, I wasn't even sure it would have one vote.

I point that out because you are going to see some real problems with negative reactions and inertia in trying to tie things together. For instance, Vermont has been a leader in trying to redo its vocational education, but we found tremendous inertia in the educators in regards to restructuring or working along the lines you are talking about.

I wonder what you have in mind to try to remove that inertia that exists in some of our educators, especially vocational educators, and trying to move in the directions you are talking about?

Secretary RILEY. Senator, first of all, Secretary Reich and I agree 100 percent on the importance of it and the need for it. We don't have time, resources to waste and to get caught up in the differences and in the very serious turf battles that go on. People make very convincing arguments from the various groups. We are going to work hard together to see from the top that we are working together. I know in my State, I got involved in taking all the training forces and putting them together, and we had some of the most controversial meetings that I have ever participated in, with literally, people almost red in the face and nose-to-nose.

I remember those just as you do, and that is out there. We have got to get people thinking about the importance of what we are doing. It is so much more important than the turf situation. And we will try to provide leadership to do that.

We have various linkages to try to handle these transitions. I would like to see us form some joint groups, starting with Dr. Reich and myself to come down, and see joint groups working together, making decisions together. Those kinds of things would certainly interest me.

Secretary REICH. Senator, if I may, word has gone down from the secretaries' offices at education and labor that the staffs are going to work together in as seamless a way as the education and training system that we are trying to create, and so far, it has worked. I don't know what the history has been, but I have been terribly impressed by how well during the past month these two sets of staffs have been working together.

Let me also mention that although there may be some recalcitrance in certain parts of the educational community, there are some great, great success stories out there. From my part of the world, community colleges and some of the vocational and technical institutes have been working with the business community, and again, not on a national level, and there is not the portability, there is not the certification programs. Sometime when students get something, it is not exactly within the framework that might be optimal for them, but nonetheless students are getting a school-to-work program, and the business community and the educational community in places around the country are doing a superb job.

We don't want to—and I want to emphasize this—I don't want to in any inhibit all of the creativity and innovation that is going on. The goal here is simply to provide a channel, a direction and a framework to spur even more innovation and creativity and some focus for the good work that is already happening.

Senator JEFFORDS. We found in Vermont that the business community was what rescued us from the inertia. They got so involved in urging the redesign of the vocational educational programs that I think the educators listened to them, and had to listen to them, because that's where the jobs were. So I would just pass that piece of information on.

It does bring me to the point—although, since Governor Kunin is your deputy, Secretary Riley, I don't think this is a problem—that there are some States, as Senator Kassebaum pointed out, that are trying to lead the way in these things, and I don't know just what you have in mind for learning from those States and sharing that information and making sure that, hopefully, we don't run at cross-purposes to those States that are being successful.

Secretary RILEY. Thank you, sir, and we'll certainly see that that is done. That is the intent of the whole goals panel purpose, is to pick up what is working, where it is working, and to promote that throughout the country.

Senator JEFFORDS. I spent a week over in Germany studying their system, and I think there are some things to take from it, but I also agree with you that there are some differences there. And it seemed to me the biggest difference was that in Germany there is a very stable work population, and that it goes from father to

son, or father to daughter, or mother to daughter, or whatever, very differently than in this country, which has a very mobile population. I don't know whether you share that feeling or not.

Secretary REICH. That is one difference that I have also noted, and our mobility can be our strength. I mean, there are certain rigidities built into a system in which you have occupational groups that are fairly narrowly defined, where you have training systems that are based upon those fairly narrowly defined occupational groups and where you have so little mobility, generationally or geographically.

So again, I don't think that it is fully a model, but what we do have to learn there is that they somehow have created a school-to-work transition system not based on college degrees, in which they are generating a high degree of skills and competence, yielding higher real wages on average than in the United States. That should make us pause.

Senator JEFFORDS. In Vermont, at least in my city of Rutland, we are working with GE and have a similar program with them. Of course, now they are cutting back on their work force, which is obviously hindering that, but it seems to be working pretty well.

Also, I wondered about the special interests and needs of the disabled community—how do you anticipate trying to ensure that a problem is not created in utilization of the disabled community?

Secretary REICH. As I said, Senator—and this is one of the key principles with regard to creating these national standards—they must be nondiscriminatory, they must take account of the particular needs of particular groups, and again, the needs of the disabled community must be accommodated to the extent possible.

Senator JEFFORDS. I would point out that in the last reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, we created an early intervention program—though it hasn't been funded yet—with the idea of having mentoring and assistance not just for those going on to higher education, but to try to generate enthusiasm for staying in school, basically. I would suggest you take a look at that. It seems to me that it could be broadened into ensuring that the recipients are aware of skill areas as well as higher education opportunities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. I just want to underline a point that Senator Jeffords made. A number of us, Senator Dodd and others, including myself, were looking a few years ago at what we called "Smart Start," which was basically moving the Head Start program down to the earlier years. The division that came out in local communities among Head Start workers, and I yield to no one in terms of support of that, was the difference between the Head Start workers, who were looking more at nutrition and the range of social services, as compared to education, which the Head Start people felt were looking more for an academic kind of education experience, at the local level was just extraordinary. In both groups—I am a strong supporter of both groups all the time—the difficulty was and understanding and working through that. I think that basically, all of us were looking at the same kinds of needs for the children and were really trying to enhance both the confidence-building and nutritional aspects of children, which was something that was very alive at the local community. I don't know whether

Senator Jeffords was talking about that, and I think all of us see it at different levels, but when he raised that point, I think as you get into this thicket, you find that out there in a lot of different areas. I hope we can all be supportive and helpful, but I think it is something that we have to be mindful of.

Senator Dodd.

Senator DODD. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I'll submit an opening statement for the record, and I want to commend the Chairman for inviting both of our secretaries to be here together this morning. I think this concept of a seamless garment of education and services, which they have brought forward in their statements, is critically important.

I think probably Ron Brown being here as well would perhaps have completed the circle in a sense, but certainly having the Secretary of Labor and the Secretary of Education here is a major step.

[The prepared statement of Senator Dodd follows:]

STATEMENT OF SENATOR DODD

Mr. Chairman, it is a pleasure to welcome back to our committee, Secretary Riley and Secretary Reich.

I am especially happy to see you here together. We asked during your confirmation hearings that you work together whenever possible—but rarely have we had our advice taken so literally.

As you both clearly recognize, the education of our Nation s youth and, indeed, of our Nation as a whole is a task which requires the efforts of more than just those at the Department of Education. The issue is not simply one of education—it is the preparation of the work force of tomorrow and the retraining of today's work force. In this regard, it seems most appropriate that Secretary Reich has joined us in this discussion of Education Goals and Standards.

When the Governors and then-President Bush agreed on the National Education Goals and set a target date for meeting these goals, the year 2000 seemed far away. There was time to improve school readiness, student achievement and completion; time for our students to be first in the world in math and science; and time to enhance lifelong learning and to assure our students of safe, disciplined and drug-free schools.

Yet, here we are in 1993, just 7 years shy of the next millenium. While the goals have become widely accepted, we are still no closer to meeting them. There remains little agreement on what exactly they mean to students and teachers and how we will actually reach them. I believe we must move forward on the goals and I am very pleased that we are beginning that process with you today.

I also want to take this opportunity to compliment you both for the role you played in the development of the President's Economic Initiative. I think this proposal moves us, as a nation, forward in many important ways.

It recognizes the importance of reducing the deficit as well as the importance of investment in the long term health of our economy and our people. The proposal for full-funding of Head Start and additional money for WIC, childhood immunizations and LIHEAP are critical to meeting the needs of our Nation's children—and also to meeting our first National Education Goal of School Readiness. The

additional support for Chapter I, the inclusion of a summer job program for youth, and the strong commitment to national service will mean much in many urban neighborhoods so desperate for our help and support. There are many other specifics which impressed me, but even more than any one item, I was impressed by the President's overall plan to end this nightmare of budget deficits and address the real growth issues that plague our economy.

I look forward to hearing your testimony and to working with you both on this and other initiatives.

If I could, I'd like to pick up on the comments of the chairman. I think what you are proposing here makes a lot of sense, and we are anxious to see the details of it. But I would like to take you to a different level of this discussion, if I could.

Obviously, what happens in terms of the skill levels and being prepared for the 21st century job market is critically important. Someone said the other day that 50 percent of all the jobs in this country did not exist 25 years ago. Eighty-five percent of all the scientists who ever lived are alive today. So there is a remarkable change occurring in our economy.

However, it seems to me that sometimes a whole group of our citizens are left out of this discussion—citizens who are far-removed from the possibilities of even basic vocational education, let alone college and the like, and who are suffering in this situation.

I don't know if anyone noticed the television program the other—I think it was "60 Minutes"—about a program in Bridgeport, CT run by a group of nuns. Basically, the program they run is entitled, "Teach a Mother to Read, Educate a Family." They work almost exclusively with AFDC recipients, on the theory that a mother that can read to her child at night is empowered to do so much more for her family—follow instructions, and read labels on medicines and foods. While this doesn't necessarily show up against standards for the job market of the 21st century, it is critically important in terms of keeping families together and encouraging nurturing that goes beyond just providing sustenance and shelter. I was deeply impressed by the work they are doing.

This kind of adult education is something that I think we have got to put a far greater emphasis on, whether it is in the context of standards or as the President discussed the other night, a work requirement for those on welfare to move them into the job market. I don't know if you have given any thought to the idea of having some sort of basic literacy requirement as a part of this effort. Moving someone into a job at McDonald's and so forth may not be all that bad. I mean, we tend to talk about basic service jobs in a way that implies they are somehow dreadful jobs. However, for someone with limited skills, but can read, and who is unlikely to end up in a community college or vocational school, it seems to me that these jobs may be a significant step forward in terms of their own independence. More importantly maybe is the opportunity this provides families and children who are being raised in that family setting.

I know it is a different subject matter here than you are generally addressing, but it seems to me it is one that we also have to focus on if we are going to provide any real hope at all to a whole group of people in this country that simply have limited opportunities.

I wonder if each of you would care to comment on that.

Secretary RILEY. That's a very realistic and real approach to life as it is, and certainly we all need to be in tune with that. It is my general feeling, Senator, that when we talk about high standards, some people say, well, you know, you are talking about leaving all or a good portion of the people out. And I disagree with that. I have thought about that a lot as I have worked with education over the years.

High standards are good for everyone. My general concept is to have high standards, but reward people on improvement. If a young person who can't read learns how to read, or if a 50 year-old person learns how to read, the reward system, the incentive system, should be moved toward the level of improvement. That's what the system is all about, how much better are they this year in terms of education than last year.

So you cannot seek mediocre standards and hunt for levels of standards to suit all of the different problems out there, as unfair as that might seem in the beginning. But I think that everyone is served well by having the high world class standards, to be very sensitive from—as you know, my feeling about early childhood development and infant mortality and poor pregnant women and so forth—to work hard on all levels to see to it, as young people grow, that they develop this "ethic for learning" that the President talks about and have that instilled in poor families and wealthy families alike. And as the future develops, if we are able to instill that kind of feeling, I think you would see an awful lot of change. It becomes a positive thing, a very positive thing, for a young person to work to improve themselves, and that's what I would like to see develop.

Secretary REICH. Senator, if I may speak from the standpoint of the workplace, obviously a literate work force is a prerequisite to being competitive internationally. We have now in many of our workplaces a vicious cycle at work in the sense that employers are not finding employees who have the basic skills, and employers in turn are, to use a colloquial verb, "dummying down" many of the jobs. They are simplifying the jobs so that even sometimes in fast food restaurants, you don't have to read; you just push certain buttons that have the right symbols. But as they do so, they reduce the value added by those employees and make those dead-end jobs, in fact guarantee that those are going to be dead-end jobs.

Inevitably, sadly, there are going to be people who get through the system who don't have the basic skills. So I think we have to think hard about literacy training on the job, using the work force and the workplace as one of our sites to ensure that people are getting basic degrees, minimal levels of literacy and numeracy, and work with the private sector to achieve that.

Senator DODD. I understand that, and I certainly support that, and I am not suggesting—and I apologize if I gave you the impression that I was talking about lowering standards. I just see a whole group of people in this country that are never even going to reach the threshold. I mean, it is one thing to get the job, and I agree, in some instances we have some wonderful workplace literacy programs, which are working to increase skills——

Secretary REICH. They are working.

Senator DODD. However, if you exclude the cyclical involvement of certain people who are on and off welfare, and just look at time spans—and you probably know these numbers better than I do, Mr. Secretary—after receiving benefits for 5 to 6 years, people are caught in these programs almost as if in cement. I was stunned to learn about how many people in this group just cannot even meet the most basic educational requirements, so the idea of them ever even getting a job is becoming less and less likely. And aside from that laudable goal of getting people into the work force, there is the issue of the family structure, which is what I was driving at a bit here. It seems to me, that in terms of nurturing a child, in terms of parenting skills and of parents as first teachers, if you don't even have the basic ability to read, to read the most simple instructions, to read even the most simple primer to your child, there is a fundamental breakdown even before the process begins.

And maybe I am taking you far afield from the subject of this hearing, but we must focus on this group of people as well, as we set standards we must work to reach those who remain at this level. I fear that despite well-intentioned efforts we are not really reaching them. That's my worry.

Secretary REICH. That's an important point.

Secretary RILEY. Well, you State the problem very clearly, and I would hope that our school system in the future would reduce it significantly.

You do have programs, as was pointed out, like the Even Start, that takes young kids who are coming into the school system and pulls their parents into that to learn with their children, and the work-literacy programs and so on, Senator. And I don't know any other answer to say other than education is not a fast process, and I wish it were. But it is something that takes years and years and years, and I hope the system will do a lot toward eliminating that in the future, and all of us just have to work together to try to make those people who don't have skills or education develop them in some way as best we can.

Senator DODD. Let me just mention two other quick points to you before my time expires. One is I have tried to speak at a public high school in my State on a weekly basis, and literally, in 10 years, have spoken at every, single public high school in my State, primarily to juniors and seniors. Last week, in addition to doing that, I met with the Connecticut Council of Student Governments, the class officers, primarily, from schools across the State. And one of the points they raised, which I think is a pretty important, is the issue of involving students in educational reform. We obviously talk to a lot of people, but I was impressed with these students. They were concerned and conscientious; and their ideas and suggestions were intelligent.

And I just raise that to make sure they are involved and included. Many of them were mature far beyond their years in many ways and understood the problems and the difficulties associated with school reform. But I think in discussing what can be done, this is a constituency that we ought to maybe listen to, as we do employees in the work force. It makes sense to listen to students who are there on a daily basis, grappling with these problems. They have some pretty good ideas and suggestions.

And second is the physical infrastructure of our institutions. A survey was done on a magnet school in the New Haven area recently, and even though it had wonderful standards and was doing a terrific job, the physical plant was failing—ceilings leaked, and the building was just falling apart. I hope in the discussion of all of this, as I am confident will be the case, we will be talking about not only the standards that we want to have achieved in terms of academic performance, but also about some minimum standards of what a classroom or an educational facility ought to be like, in recognition of these factors which can enhance dramatically the learning experience and the receptivity of students to what is being taught.

Obviously, that raises questions of cost and so forth, but I hope at some point to discuss that issue as well. I don't see anywhere in the Constitution where it is written that we have to fund elementary and secondary education out of a property tax. And I would like to think that at some point we would talk about this issue. I suspect in this country that some form of dedicated tax, committed to elementary and secondary education, would enjoy broad-based, deep support. It is an issue that people understand and accept. Obviously, with any kind of tax increases, people are concerned. But I get a clear sense that this is one area where people really are willing to belly up to do something and rather than to continue to rely on local civil wars over rising property taxes. I think our funding scheme has got to change at some point if we want to do a lot of these things. And my hope is that at some point, we might be willing to talk about some sort of dedicated tax for elementary and secondary education, and at least begin to achieve some parity with our higher educational performance in this country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Just to follow up on Senator Dodd's point, if any American saw the President respond to those questions last Saturday morning on that television for an hour and a half, I thought it was the best television program I have seen in I can't remember—going back to the Civil War programs, and maybe "Roots." It was just mind-boggling. I think the President's performance was just superb, but as Senator Dodd pointed out, the children asking questions—and it wasn't just one question; it was the followups, the emotions and the reactions—it was just absolutely extraordinary. I hope ABC and the telephone companies run it again because it was an extraordinary service. We've got to give them a plug. They ran it. It was a great, great service.

Senator Simon.

Senator SIMON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did not see it, but I heard it was a great program.

Just a few reflections, and these get to be brainstorming sessions here, like the suggestion Chris Dodd just made, which I want to comment on in a minute. Tomorrow I will be introducing a bill that we have worked on with your two departments called the "Career Pathways Act". We'll have a hearing next week and would be happy to have either of you or representatives of your departments testify. It basically is trying to look at how we can get business, labor and education working together in this field.

I am concerned as I listen to all of this that there are people, the underclass, who can get left out of this. And I recognize this is not the focus of this particular discussion, but I think it ties in so directly. Secretary Riley, when you said education is not a fast process, that is generally true. There is an exception, and that is literacy, which is relatively a fast thing.

We passed the National Literacy Act here a couple of years ago, and we had a great ceremony in the Rose Garden—but it took a year before the first people were appointed. That thing really has not moved as it should. It is primarily in your shop, Secretary Riley, and I don't expect you to get everything going in just a few weeks, but in 6 or 8 weeks, I would really like to come back to you and ask how we are doing. And incidentally, this involves the Secretary of Labor, as well as Ms. Shalala's shop, as well as some others. Interestingly, the Secretary of Labor historically has spoken much more about illiteracy than has the Secretary of Education. But conservative figures are that we have 23 million adult Americans who cannot fill out an employment form and who cannot read a newspaper. We have about 3 million adult Americans who cannot recognize their name in block print.

So when you talk about upgrading skills, having that most fundamental skill of all is really basic. Here is the brainstorming part of this. At the elementary school level in Illinois, at least, we check everybody at the 4th grade. We have certain checkpoints, to see how people are doing. I wonder if we shouldn't have checkpoints for adult Americans. When people sign up for welfare, when people sign up for unemployment compensation, when people sign up to renew a driver's license, let's see what is happening in their lives and see if there can't be an enrichment.

I have spent some time visiting Chicago schools in the west side and the south side, the deprived areas of the city, taking no reporters along, just trying to get a feel for what is happening. And one of the lessons is that where you have a good principal, it makes all the difference in the world. It is amazing how that one factor makes a huge difference.

The second thing I hear from teachers over and over—and this is why this ties in, as Senator Dodd has mentioned—is that where you have parents who can read and write and who can help their children, it just makes a dramatic difference. That's why literacy is so important.

And the third thing—and this is why ultimately we are going to have to be looking at the resource question—the third thing is just basics. I go into a classroom, and the kids are working with used workbooks that some other student filled out a year before—but that's all they can afford.

You mentioned the importance of counselors, Secretary Reich. When I go to an elementary school with hundreds of students and they have one counselor part-time—and this is an area with drug problems and every other kind of problem—you just know we have to have greater resources. And I like Senator Dodd's idea that we have some dedicated portion of the tax program. Alice Rivlin wrote a book suggesting that people are not opposed to taxes if they are dedicated to specific programs. I think at some point, after you have all these meetings, one of the questions is the bottom line:

How do we pay for what we know we have to do. And I like Senator Dodd's idea on that.

Then, finally, it seems to me that the local input idea has to involve some leadership in stretching people in their thinking. Very frequently in a small community, in South Carolina or Illinois or Massachusetts, people are limited by their experiences. If you can say here are some ideas that people are talking about around the Nation, some kind of a primer for everyone who is a participant, so this stretching takes place, I think that is extremely important.

Well, I have wandered on, but if I may be very specific—East St. Louis has, just about every problem you can think of. How is what we are talking about going to help East St. Louis?

Secretary RILEY. Senator, the problems there are problems that must be dealt with, and to have an answer, you would have to have really almost a change of attitude of people who are struggling, oftentimes in a condition of poverty and unhealthy, unsafe conditions. And to say that you can have the best school system in the world within two blocks of those conditions and thereby bring about all of these changes that you and I would like to see take place, it is simply not going to happen.

However, if you have within those regions the heart of hope and standards and pulling yourself out of the hole—the only way to come out of the hole is education. That's the only way to come out of the hole. We can put all kinds of efforts in there to try to help regions of high poverty out, and if they are coming out—and it might be a generation off; I understand exactly what you mean by literacy and how you can take an adult who has been out working, looking at maps and glancing at newspapers all their life, and you can really teach them an awful lot in not a long period of time—but the depth of an education, as you know, takes a long period of time.

The hope that I have is that if we can get parents and friends and communities pulling closer together, get people in neighborhoods that want to improve themselves and improve their neighborhoods and their communities, education can be the focal point of that way out. And I would say any dollar we put into well thought out, carefully planned education improvement has to be part of the answer for those areas of high poverty and high problems.

Secretary REICH. Senator, from the standpoint of the work force, let me just say that there is no doubt in my mind, and the studies show it again and again and again, a direct relationship between education and future earnings and future well-being.

I can only underscore and emphasize again what Secretary Riley has said. There are many, many pieces to the puzzle. There are many prerequisites. The intractable problems of poverty, some of them getting worse in our country, demand huge effort and attention on our part. But one of the key prerequisites is education and the appropriate training so that people have an opportunity to get a job. Without that, they just don't even have an opportunity.

Senator SIMON. Let me just say I concur with that. I just hope—and I'm all for an enrichment in Carbondale, IL; we can use it, we need it—but I hope in the process of reaching Carbondale and Co-

lumbia and other places, that we ask this very basic question: How is it going to affect East St. Louis?

Secretary REICH. The President is proposing—and this is not in any way a solution, but it is a small step in the right direction—a major jobs program this summer for disadvantaged youth; $1 billion more in that supplemental 1993 appropriation, which would create about 1.3 million summer jobs for disadvantaged kids which would be educationally enriched.

In other words, one of the big problems in the summer is that a lot of these kids lose some of the year that they just had educationally because they are simply not exposed to an educational environment. And this plan would provide 1.3 million kids, many of them in some of the poorest areas, in fact targeted especially to the 100 poorest areas of this country, which would provide them with jobs and educational enrichment. Again, it is not the answer, but it is a small step in the right direction.

Secretary RILEY. I might add, Senator, that in that same package there is half a billion dollars that goes to Chapter 1 and the high-problem areas, the most poor areas of the Chapter 1 areas, and as Secretary Reich says, it won't be any permanent kind of solution at all, but it will be for this summer some very important summer school programs for those poor children.

Senator SIMON. Absolutely, and I applaud that.

Thank you.

Senator DODD. Excuse me. That was Charles Kurault, now that I remember the program, on Sunday. I want to make sure he gets the credit.

The CHAIRMAN. If I might indulge, I saw Mary Robinson, who is President of Ireland, not long ago, and she was commenting that she had recently participated in an awards ceremony for the ten best schools in Ireland, we all know we've got an entirely different socioeconomic background, she said that six of the ten awards went to schools in the poorest areas. When I asked the reason, it was 1) because the parents had the highest unemployment, 60 to 70 percent, and they understood the importance of education. Second, the disparity between the various schools is marginal, if nonexistent. And third, the best teachers wanted to go and teach those children because they knew they were the hungriest and wanted to learn.

Now, we've got an entirely different situation in East St. Louis and in my own City of Boston. But somewhere in the backs of our minds, we try and do something with the parents, equal the funding, do something in support of those students. Somewhere along the line, there is certainly some hope and opportunity down the road.

Senator Harkin.

Senator HARKIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a statement that I'd like to have put in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be.

[The prepared statement of Senator Harkin follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARKIN

Mr. Chairman, education is vital not only to the well-being of our children, but to our economy. In order to be competitive, the United

States must have the smartest, most productive and healthiest work force in the world. But saying the words is not enough, we need to chart a course to get us there. And that's what this hearing is all about—drawing the map that takes us where we want to go in the next century.

The economic health of our Nation and workers is directly related to our educational system and our schools must change. I am always struck by the fact that most schools I visit today, look just like they did when I attended. But there have been dramatic changes to the rest of society. In most cases a single parent or both parents work outside the home. Microwave ovens have changed the way we cook at home. The workplace has been revolutionized by portable phones, fax machines and computers. Roads and bridges are built differently, but we continue to prepare workers the same old way.

Gone are the high paying manufacturing jobs of yesterday and so too, we must get rid of the educational system that prepared those workers. Let me be clear, there was nothing wrong with those schools of the 1950's and 1960's but the times have changed. We have a choice between unskilled, low-paying jobs or high-skilled, good-paying jobs. I choose good jobs and a new school system that prepares the workers for them.

I am looking forward to hearing about the administration's plans on reforming our Nation's schools from Secretary of Education Riley and Secretary of Labor Reich. Welcome to this important hearing by the Labor and Human Resources Committee on Education Goals and Standards.

I wanted to follow up as well on what Senator Dodd said about the property taxes and finding a dedicated source of revenue, and Senator Simon chimed in on that. Again, I keep trying to point out to people that my kids go to school in Fairfax County, about 13 miles from where we sit, and they have a great education. They have a great school system in Fairfax County. Five blocks from here, you've got some of the worst school systems anywhere in America. Why? People are poor here. They pay very little property taxes. Out where we live, people have a lot of money, so they have good schools.

And a child who is poorly educated in the District of Columbia or South Carolina or California or Iowa isn't just a drag on the local property taxpayers; when that kid grows up, that kid is a drag on all of society because that child will move around, move from State to State. So we all have a stake in this.

I know you agree with that, but I'm just saying that you have the bully pulpit. The two of you have the national stature and the bully pulpit, along with the President, to start driving this point home to the American people. I can say it. Senator Simon can say it. We don't have that high visibility that you have. And I would hope that we could start that process of getting the American people to think about a different system of financing and funding what I am about to get to—elementary education, secondary education, and early childhood education. So I would hope you would think about talking about it in that sense, that there is something wrong with the way we fund it through property taxes. It just doesn't make sense.

Obviously, people want to keep local control over their schools, and that is one of the reasons, but I don't see any reason why we can't have a different funding source and still keep local control. I don't think the two are mutually exclusive whatsoever.

Having said that, let me move to the two things I really wanted to talk about. I had to leave the room for a little bit, and I apologize, but I guess no one has really mentioned what the first national education goal is, and I am going to sound like a stuck record on this, but of all the goals, the one that was placed first—and the reason it was placed first is because it is the most important—is that every child be ready and able to learn when that child enters school by the year 2000.

Now, the Committee on Economic Development that was headed by Jim Ranier, the head of Honeywell, came out with the study, and I have committed to memory what they said, which was that we should change the way we look at education. Education begins at birth, and the preparation for education begins before birth.

While we have thought of programs like WIC and maternal and child health care and childhood immunization, as welfare programs, what they are suggesting is that we should look upon them as part of the educational program. And you, Secretary Riley, said it best. I think you used the words "seamless system." But if you don't start at that time, that fabric is going to be pretty weak later on.

For example, under my committee, we spend about $6 billion a year on Chapter 1. It's a great program. It works wonderfully. We've got good teachers, good facilities, and you are talking about putting more into it for the summer, and that's good. But what is Chapter 1? Chapter 1 is remedial. It is remedial reading and remedial math. It is catchup ball. If these kids had had a decent preparation beforehand, well, you might still need some Chapter 1, but I think we could at least hold Chapter 1 where it is instead of it growing. We serve about 55 percent right now at $6 billion. I submit that we would be wiser looking at the long-term—and both of you stated in your statements—looking at the long-term to start fixing it earlier.

Now, there has been a lot of talk on Head Start, that we're going to fully fund Head Start, and I am all for that, but I think we may have gotten a false sense in this country that all we have to do is fund Head Start, and we can forget about it. But if you pick a kid up at age 3, and you take that kid through age 5, and you drop him again, you really haven't done anything; you have helped him for about 3 years, and that's about it.

So move it up earlier, and then after age 5, we have to have a follow-through program on Head Start to follow through on what happened during Head Start. And I know the Chairman said something about maybe we should have had Secretary Shalala here, and I don't know why those things work out, but in HHS, we've got over $4 billion in education programs—Head Start, for example—under that. And somehow we have got to pull these together and get over these turf battles and segregating these things out and get to that early childhood education.

Senator Dodd was, I think, the author of the ABC bill, the Act for Better Child Care. We fund it; we are trying to get it going with

very little. Secretary Reich, you talked about work force training, and you talked about the "dummying down" of jobs, and people who used to work at these jobs being overtaken by technology. You see it every day. But I think there is a whole new sector that could come into play here that would solve a lot of our problems, and that is well-trained men and women to fill the provisions of the Act for Better Child Care, so we could get these kids early in life—not just as a warehouse for kids when their parents go to work, but as a place where those kids can be nurtured in a loving, caring atmosphere, where they are educated, where they have decent food and nutrition. I can see a whole work force trained to do that, and of course, paid well to do it—paid well to do it. We'd be better off to move in that direction.

So I hope that when you look at work force training, you will look at that, and again, use your position to talk to the American people about this. We have to train a new system of workers out there to take care of kids in child care centers so that these kids are educated from the first moment on.

And again, we are going to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. When does elementary school start? If we're going to brainstorm, maybe we ought to think about redefining elementary education. When does it start? Do we just go along with the States and their definitions, or should we redefine when elementary education starts? Maybe it does start at birth. And if we redefine it, then we pay for it in a different way, and we start looking at it differently.

So I would submit that to you for your consideration, and that is the broken record, and you've heard me before, and you will keep hearing me talk about this.

Last, I want to follow up on a question by Senator Jeffords concerning individuals with disabilities. The promise of the Americans with Disabilities Act is not meeting certain minimum standards. It is full inclusion of individuals with disabilities, full inclusion in every aspect of our lives. And I am concerned that work force and education standards could have the unintended consequence of increased segregation. What do I mean by that?

We have standards, and we want to meet these high standards. Well, Johnny in the classroom has a learning disability. Our thrust was to bring these kids into the mainstream. Or, maybe he has a physical disability and can't quite keep up with the class and can't quite meet those standards. So then will there be pressure to say we'll get those kids out of there because they may drag our standards down?

So somehow, while I support high standards, we must include individuals with disabilities. But there are going to have to be appropriate modifications. Now, again, Secretary Reich, you responded by saying—and I made a note here—we will consider particular needs of people with disabilities and accommodate to the degree possible. I hope there will be a different focus and that from the very beginning you have a strategy and a plan—both your side and your side—a strategy and a plan to include people with disabilities in work force training and in education.

Secretary REICH. If I may, Senator, not only is it important to include them, but as we envision the skill standards, skill stand-

ards properly designed can be a means for people with disabilities to get into the mainstream of the work force because it enables them to provide a credential to employers that says essentially, look, I meet the standards you are seeking; regardless of my particular physical disability, regardless of any other disability, I have this credential that proves in a sense that I have met that standard.

So properly conceived, those skill standards can be a vehicle for overcoming disabilities which might otherwise signal to employers that somebody who is quite adept without a college degree, for example, does have the ability to meet the job needs.

Senator HARKIN. And I appreciate that. I just hope that, again, in the beginning, there is a strategy and a plan encompassed within this that deals with that directly. I would hope that.

Secretary REICH. Yes.

Senator HARKIN. And again, in education, whatever may be necessary there in terms of these educational standards so that Johnny is not segregated back out again and so that we have—for example, in the grade school where my kids go to school, they have begun integrating kids with disabilities, and it has been a wonderful thing. It sensitizes people. They find that they are human just like the rest of us. And it is amazing how sometimes kids who are given that opportunity can really do quite well.

So again, when we develop these standards, Mr. Secretary, I just hope that when you set those out that people with disabilities are not some afterthought, but they are put right up at the beginning, and that there is a plan, as I said, and a strategy to make sure they are incorporated fully within those standards.

Secretary RILEY. Thank you, Senator, and I thank you for your years of special work in the area of people with disabilities. As you know, I share your feelings, and in response to your question, yes, we will see that that is done.

The general feeling I have, as I stated earlier, is to have high standards for all people and then have the important measurement be the improvement level. I am comfortable with that kind of a setting for all people. Every child out there, the 46-47 million, all of them have different capacities, and that is the exciting thing about education, and millions and millions have some form of difficulty in learning or other forms of disability, but the fact is the system must plan and have a strategy for all children, every, single one of them.

Senator HARKIN. I appreciate that.

Last—and again, I hope not as an afterthought on my part, but my time has run out—there is a lot of focus on urban education and the problems of inner city schools. Coming from a town of 150 people in rural Iowa, I can tell you there are problems in rural education, too, in some ways that even overshadow some of the problems in the inner city schools, because we can't get teachers out there; people are dispersed. We have to think about that aspect also of rural education.

The chairman has been great in moving the STAR Schools program, which is going to help greatly in rural education, but we need not to forget about the needs of our rural people, too.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I am constantly reminded by my own son who lost a leg to cancer that disabled is not unable. And I know Secretary Riley, having faced some personal challenges of his own in this area, has a long-time continuing commitment.

Senator Harkin, and I visited a school in Massachusetts about 10 days ago where there are a number of children with disabilities. The school varies the different types of classes in terms of amounts of time. They spend 4 or 5 hours in the main classroom with the other kids and maybe 2 hours outside to pick up on the particular kinds of special needs that they have. They vary that almost on a case-by-case method, and it is really inspiring. I'm sure we've all visited classrooms where you see all kinds of young people with what might appear to you, just watching in, as having some real challenges, but nonetheless they are doing so well. Senator Harkin pointed out, that in many instances it raises the whole temper of the class. And as all of us have seen by our experience, generally, they are the hardest workers and the ones that are setting the standard—they are the kids who are there on time, always have their homework done, and so on—and the other kids know it takes more of an effort on their part, and in so many instances they are really inspiring models.

Senator Bingaman.

Senator BINGAMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for being here. This may be obvious, and I just wanted to clarify it in my own mind. This bridge from school to work that you are talking about, would you contemplate that the skills training and the work toward a certification or toward a certificate of competency in a particular skill would begin during the high school years for those who wanted to do that, so that an 11th or a 12th grader who decided they did not want to go to college could pursue that course at that stage, or at what stage in the normal high school progression would a student have the option of beginning to do some of this work toward a competency?

Secretary REICH. Senator, there are many models of how that bridge from school to work might work. It seems to me that what we want to avoid—and I'm sure Secretary Riley has much more to say on this point—we want to avoid the stigmatizing that could occur if we have a separate track for people who are not going on to college. To some extent, that has already occurred. To the extent possible, we want to mainstream everyone through a curriculum that leads to a bridge, so that at the end of that bridge, some people may want to go on to college, some people might want to have a certification and go directly on to work, but that bridge is a bridge that is built for all.

Senator BINGAMAN. I guess—and I would be anxious to hear Secretary Riley's perspective on this—I guess my concern is that the dropout problem could possibly be addressed; that if in fact people could see that remaining in school would give them the opportunity to acquire a skill which then is marketable, the dropout problem that is very pervasive in some of our high schools might be reduced.

Secretary RILEY. Senator, I think your point is well-taken, and that is that oftentimes a young person, 11th to 12th grade, working

with a mentor/business/working relationship, industry, along with their academic progress that Dr. Reich is talking about, this stigma business we have got to change. And I know of your involvement in education, and I would welcome any help or suggestions, but you have an awful lot of college graduates out there now who are unemployed. That is helping to change it some. And as you see—and Secretary Reich talked about supply and demand—we have really got to be tuned in to the demand in this country, not only what is needed, but how to encourage industry through research and development and so forth to develop the kinds of jobs, the kinds of places for our people to move into. That's another whole side of it. But we've got to somehow bring about this feeling in young people—and you have to start young and have the general feeling—the tech prep program has some very helpful sides to it; these 2-plus-2 programs—so that a young person going into a program like that is taking a look at this occupational side of things, continuing their academic work, and then having the option to either go to college or to tech school or whatever.

But you point out the very crux of the difficulty, and if we could correct that and make it so that it was an exciting program, realizing that a young person who went into it had this option all the way up, with the same kinds of academic requirements, I think it could make a great difference.

Secretary REICH. In some communities around the Nation, there are some successful models in which the business community has been offering young people in 11th and 12th grade three-month internships which amount to the beginnings of apprenticeship, and then a guarantee that if they do that well and get a certain level of attainment and performance in the academic side of their classroom, then they will have a job waiting for them at the end of 12th grade.

I am struck by the extent to which the business community still fails, when they are hiring people directly out of high school, to ask those young people for their academic records. That small step could have an electrifying effect, because many young people who don't go on to college say to themselves, "Why should I bother? Why should I care? Nobody is going to ask anyway."

Senator BINGAMAN. Let me ask about one other issue that I've put some effort in on and that our chairman has been a leader on, and that is the use of technology in our schools to help us attain these standards that we are talking about setting, these national standards, these content standards, and the role the Federal Government might play in helping schools to obtain the technology and the technological support that teachers could use in that regard. Let me just put it in context.

A couple weeks ago when we had our last recess, I was in New Mexico—and I do student seminars every February where we bring high school kids in and talk about major issues pending in the country—and I was having lunch with a group of five students there. Two of them were from the largest high school in our State, West Mesa High School in Albuquerque, and three of them were from one of the smaller schools in our State, Caballo High School, where there are five people in their graduating class coming up. So I was asking the kids from West Mesa High what opportunities do

they have for foreign language study. They said, "We have Spanish, French, German; we can go down to the Career Enhancement Center, and I've been taking a course in Russian," and on and on. And then I asked the same question to the students at Caballo High, and they said, "We don't have foreign language. We've never had a teacher who could teach foreign language. That's not part of our curriculum."

It strikes me that it is not reasonable for us to continue with that circumstance, that disparity of opportunity between our schools, when we know that the technology is there to provide course instruction, distance learning, or various types of technologies that can be used to provide that instruction to assist the teacher who may not be expert enough to teach the course, but certainly could help the student to take advantage of the technology and see that the student has that opportunity.

We've got a lot of funding in Department of Commerce, Department of Labor, Department of Defense, and Department of Education which is earmarked for development of educational technologies, but we don't have an overall plan for how we are going to use those resources to meet these national standards, or to help schools meet these national standards, and it seems to me that is a real opportunity for us.

If either of you wish to comment on that, I'd be glad to hear your views.

Secretary RILEY. Well, I certainly agree with you that any effort to enhance education in this day and time that did not include the factors of technology use would be short of where it should be. We, of course, will have in these implementation action plans coming up from the States, inviting creativity, inviting innovation, all kinds of different uses, I am sure, for technology to help and get the kind of plan going that the small school would have the benefit of—videos and whatever—that could enhance those young people's opportunities.

The old idea of the big consolidated school, where you take all of these large areas and put a school in the middle, has helped in many cases, I am sure, and it has caused a lot of complications in many cases in terms of people having to go long distances to school and so forth.

Really, the technology is here now to move it out. The fact that you need careful personal interaction with students and teachers is always there and is always available; but to have that supplemented by high technology use, carefully done, is certainly something that all of us will be tuned into in every State.

Secretary REICH. If I may, Senator, from the standpoint of the workplace, particularly the two-tiered work force that we see developing—that is, people who are well-educated and well-trained, occupying the managerial and professional positions, but a lot of other people going on a downward escalator—the issue of educational technology becomes particularly important because one fear I have—and there is no easy way of responding to this, I don't think—is that the children of the well-to-do in this country are increasingly having access to a great deal of educational technology and software at home, not only in school. Education is becoming privatized in many ways, through no fault of anybody's, but simply

because educational technology is now so abundant and so available, but it is very costly, which perhaps underscores the point you are making and Secretary Riley is making, that it is very important to get this into the schools and particularly those schools that are serving areas that have people which can't afford these kinds of educational technologies.

Senator BINGAMAN. Yes. My final comment is that I believe Chris Whittle's great success in his effort to beam a newscast into each school around the country is because of the failure of leadership at the national level in helping schools to meet the need to get some access to technology. And I think we need to now come along and fill that leadership void, and I think the opportunity is there as part of the initiative that you are describing today.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. You mentioned educational technologies. I am fortunate now to have a little 7-year-old daughter and a son who is 10, and one of the great thrills for them is doing these geography tests. They have a little computer, and they have a whole series of cards, with questions on the capitols, on the States, on the different missiles that have gone into space, the different planets, meteors, and comets. They have 30 different tabs on there. And the 7-year-old wants to be up-to-speed to compete with her brother on it, and at night, they just can't wait to get to that educational game.

You find that different schools that have these technologies. During holidays and birthdays, it's amazing to watch children open them up because they have such an awareness of these educational games and what they really mean in terms of learning.

And as Senator Bingaman has mentioned, there is strong interest in this committee on the distance learning program and what it can do, particularly as school districts are cutting back in math and science teachers, and also the innovativeness. Ballard, the great naval explorer, did a program on the Galapagos this last year, and they tied that in to the various museums, like the Museum of Science in Boston, and tied it in with a number of schools in the Boston area. I went down to watch that program, and they had 900 children brought in by bus, and they had been studying it prior to the time they went in, and they were asking questions, and the enthusiasm and the interest and the desire to learn about science and technology, and the different aspects of water, and why the fish develop in certain kinds of ways, and the resources, and how do people come there, and where do they go. And now, Ballard is doing the same thing in what they call the Iron Bottom—this is the 40th anniversary of the Great Coral Sea Battle in the Pacific—where they had more ships sunk than any other battle in World War II, Japanese and American aircraft carriers. The children are already reading about that, reading about the history and what they can expect in terms of corrosion.

You've probably heard up here some of the frustrations that many of us feel, particularly those of us who represent States with large urban areas and the difficulty in getting a handle on that, and I am constantly impressed by the way you respond to these questions. There is no silver bullet out there, and we are very restrained about what we are really going to be able to do, but there is a seriousness and a commitment and a real dedication to trying

to do something with those kids in those inner city areas, as well as in the rural communities, that I find personally just enormously refreshing. And this holistic approach that you mention in terms of children is, I think, right on target.

So I unless there are others who wish to make additional comments——

Senator BINGAMAN. Mr. Chairman, if I could just make one other comment, just reading from the technology policy that the President and Vice President released when they were in Silicon Valley this Monday, it has some very encouraging statements in it about the intention to provide access to INTERNET, develop NREN, to expand connections between universities all the way down to K through 12. I think that is very encouraging. They also refer to an interagency task force that will be created from appropriate Federal agencies to establish software and communication standards for education and training, coordinate development of critical software elements, etc., on through. I would just urge—and I know that this has probably been thought of—but I think to the extent that that task force can have their work also focused on reaching the standards that you are here talking about today, the standards at the elementary and secondary level, the standards in our skills, I think that focus is the work, so it doesn't just become a shotgun approach of everybody going out and developing anything they can think of.

I do believe that we can develop tremendous technological support for schools that want to reach these national standards and make them available through this kind of initiative.

So I thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Kassebaum.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Just a brief question, Mr. Chairman. I believe that—and perhaps Secretary Reich, you touched on this—the Department of Labor and the Department of Education were working together on a report on a consensus of skill standards that was due in March or April; this was an earlier requirement. Is this report going to be available in March or April; is it still ongoing?

Secretary REICH. Yes. I can't speak for Department of Education, but if we are working together, we'll work together and make sure it is being done. I believe that all derives from a set of initiatives commenced last fall in which the two departments let a number of demonstration projects and grants in the standards area. The Department of Education and Department of Labor both are monitoring those demonstration projects, and we will report back.

Senator KASSEBAUM. Thank you.

Senator JEFFORDS. Mr. Chairman, I have a statement I'd like to be made part of the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes. We'll include that, as well as statements of Senators Mikulski, Hatch and Thurmond.

[The prepared statements of Senators Jeffords, Mikulski, Hatch, and Thurmond follow:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEFFORDS

Thank you Mr. Chairman. First, I would like to welcome both Secretary Riley and Secretary Reich to today's hearing. They will each play a vital role in the development of reforms and initiatives

for the youth of this country and I welcome their input and look forward to their testimony.

The issue of better preparing our children for the future is immensely important. Creating programs that reinvigorate our schools, teachers and leaders is crucial. Developing strong school-to-work transitions combining training with strong academic pursuits is also vital.

Since the landmark 1983 report A Nation At Risk this country has been grappling with the question of how to improve our schools and make them world class—for everyone—with no exceptions and no excuses. Numerous States have embarked on innovative and successful programs to restructure education. My own State of Vermont is among the States that has committed itself to systemic reform with high standards and clear goals.

Educators, businesses and community members have joined forces in Vermont to assure that every student can gain very high skills. Known as the Green Mountain Challenge, Vermont's school reform initiative is a partnership of teachers, principals, superintendents, boards, employers, parents and human services professionals. It is reform designed to listen and respect the concerns of teachers and parents while simultaneously having clear goals and benchmarks established at the top.

Among the four challenges for Vermont schools is to create technical training programs that integrate high academic skills with hands-on learning. Presently, a bill awaits approval by the State legislature to create apprenticeship programs in Vermont. The proposed governance structure provides an active role for business, the Department of Labor and unions in a three tiered system which follows the America's Choice industry standards board model.

The Vermont apprenticeship program will combine strong academic foundations with work site training. High standards for entrance and a commitment to continued performance are all aspects of the design.

Vermont's future, and the Nation's, depend on the quality of our education. States have already taken the leap and designed, implemented and committed themselves to quality education and fundamental reform. They need assistance from the Federal Government. They do not need to be told HOW to enact reform for their schools, teachers and children. They need guidance and support.

I look forward to working with both Secretary Riley and Secretary Reich in the upcoming months. I hope we will see fundamental changes in our education system in the next decade. I hope, too, that we will encourage and allow the States to continue in their own efforts and not hamper them with undue regulations and criteria.

Again, thank you for being here today and I look forward to your testimony.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKULSKI

Mr. Chairman, I would like to welcome Secretary Riley from the Department of Education and Secretary Reich from the Department of Labor here to testify this morning. I am glad to see both of you are here together. It is crucial that these two Departments

work together on education and job training initiatives. And your presence here today demonstrates that effort.

We have talked a lot in the past about developing effective school to work programs and I'm glad to see that each Department knows it has an important role to play in creating efficient and effective programs.

School to work programs are especially important these days because we now have a group of young people who need alternative ways to become skilled workers. These are young people who don't know yet whether they want to or can afford to go to college. Some of them are the young people who have fallen between the cracks because our methods of education have not kept pace with this country's growth in technology. We are facing a critical shortage of skilled young people who are capable and willing to go into science and engineering.

Our technology industry is now looking for a high skilled work force. The year 2000 will require new skills for new jobs. Many jobs aren't all going to be for Ph.D. scientists—they are going to be skilled technicians who will be the backbone of our scientific and technical infrastructure.

We've got to begin to close the gap between traditional education and the skills needed for a productive 21st century work force.

Mr. Chairman, we are in a war for America's future. And winning that war depends on jobs today and jobs tomorrow. Jobs for the nineties and jobs for the 21st century. We must have a work force that is ready for a high tech future. And right now, we're not ready.

But, we can get our students ready to compete in the global marketplace. This hearing is a step in the right direction.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR HATCH

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to join you in welcoming Secretary Riley and Secretary Reich to the hearing this morning.

I understand that this is a preliminary hearing to explore the general issue of educational standards and workplace readiness and that there is no legislation yet on the table. I will, of course, look forward to reviewing the specific proposals put forward by the Clinton administration when they are ready.

I agree with President Clinton—as I did with Presidents Bush and Reagan before him—that America's workplaces must be first rate. That means the inputs to production have to be available, and they have to be top quality. Our economic policies must make it possible for the private sector to obtain state-of-the-art plant and equipment as well as to engage in research and development activities on a continuing basis. We must also have a work force that can turn this technological wizardry into products and services.

Although, frankly, Mr. Chairman, when I look at what is going on in my own home state of Utah, I find it hard to believe those who moan and groan about the disintegrating quality of American workers. The New York Times recently noted Utah's success in developing high tech companies; and, Utah is well known for its highly educated, dedicated work force.

While I agree we must provide training opportunities for those who may otherwise be left behind—the economically disadvan-

taged, the disabled, the structurally unemployed displaced worker—and I have worked hard with you, Mr. Chairman, and other members of this committee to support Federal efforts in this area—I believe we must carefully define the extant problem before we commit billions of new Federal dollars to trying to solve it. Congress no longer has the luxury of funding a new Federal program just because it sounds good.

Responsible legislators must look at new spending for education or employment programs in the context of our critical budgetary situation. Even if we call such spending an investment in the future, Congress cannot go on pretending such spending doesn't affect the bottom line. Unfortunately, the result of such rationalizations, using President Clinton's own projections for the deficit and the increasing national debt burden, will have a disastrous impact on the next generation.

Mr. Chairman, I want to express my sincere appreciation to Secretary Riley and Secretary Reich for being here this morning. And, again, I look forward to working with them on ways of improving our current efforts in education and job training without breaking the bank.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SENATOR THURMOND

Mr. Chairman: It is a pleasure to be here this morning to hear testimony concerning Education Goals and Standards. I would like to join my colleagues in extending a warm welcome to the Secretary of Labor, Robert Reich, and my good friend from South Carolina, the Secretary of Education, Richard Riley.

Mr. Chairman, most Federal aid for elementary and secondary education is authorized under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. I believe we have a great opportunity to invest in this country's future through education by reforming education with the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

Clearly, areas of concern will be to ensure that all children in America start school ready to learn, and that a higher percentage of our students graduate from high school. All schools in America should be free of drugs and violence and should offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

Mr. Chairman, as we address educational reform, we must keep in mind that when the Department of Education was first established, Congress specifically included statutory language to ensure that the Federal Government not be involved in curriculum or the manner or means of instruction at the local level.

Again, I want to welcome our witnesses here today and I look forward to reviewing their testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. I also appreciate your reference to the summer jobs programs and the educational component. We did that in a few programs last summer that had some educational component, but having the administration emphasize that as well and be committed to it, I think, is very, very encouraging.

I want to again thank you. We look forward to working closely with you. We are enormously grateful for your comments, and I think all of us on the committee, and certainly those who have watched it, are very reassured both about your awareness and sen-

sitivity to these issues and questions as well as the very strong, determined commitment to deal with strengthening our educational and training programs so that we will have a first-class work force that is going to be able to compete and offer real hope and opportunity for young people. That is what this is really all about, and giving the assurance to their families that we are committed toward that kind of opportunity for our young people.

We are very, very grateful for your testimony.

The committee stands in recess.

[Whereupon, at 12:25 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

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